# THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

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*The New Indian Express*
Wishes its readers

Merry Christmas


**W.H.O. ASKS COUNTRIES TO RAMP UP SURVEILLANCE AS COVID CASES SURGE**

**The world health agency on Sunday asked countries in Southeast Asia to increase monitoring amid an uptick in Covid-19 cases**

**TRACKING IS IMPORTANT AS VIRUS EVOLVES**

The Covid-19 virus is evolving and is circulating in all countries globally. "While current evidence suggests that the additional public health risk posed by JN.1 (a new variant of Covid virus) is low, we must continue to track the evolution of these viruses to tailor our response," the WHO said. It urged countries to strengthen surveillance and ensure the data is shared

**OVER 650 NEW CASES, 1 DEATH IN 24 HOURS**

- In recent weeks, JN.1 was reported in multiple countries, and its prevalence has been increasing rapidly. Experts anticipate this variant to cause an increase in Covid-19 cases, especially since it's the winter season
- India reported 656 new Covid cases on Sunday, taking the total number of active cases in the country to 3,742. One death was reported from Kerala

**220.6 cr**

DOSES OF COVID VACCINES ADMINISTRED IN INDIA SO FAR, AS PER OFFICIAL DATA


CHENNAI ▪ MADURAI ▪ VIJAYAWADA ▪ BENGALURU ▪ KOCHI ▪ HYDERABAD ▪ VISAKHAPATNAM ▪ COIMBATORE ▪ KOZHIKODE ▪ THIRUVANANTHAPURAM ▪ BELAGAVI ▪ BHUBANESWAR ▪ SHIVAMOGGA ▪ MANGALURU ▪ TIRUPATI ▪ TIRUCHY ▪ TIRUNELVELI ▪ SAMBALPUR ▪ HUBBALLI ▪ DHARMAPURI ▪ KOTTAYAM ▪ KANNUR ▪ VILLUPURAM ▪ KOLLAM ▪ TADEPALLIGUDEM ▪ NAGAPATTINAM ▪ THRISSUR ▪ KALABURAGI


# Sports ministry stops 'hasty' WFI

IOA asked to form ad-hoc panel; under pressure, Brij Bhushan says he is leaving the sport

FIROZ MIRZA @Chennai

THREE days after the Wrestling Federation of India had completed its election process that led to more protests by star wrestlers Sakshi Malik and Bajrang Punia, the sports minister stepped in and asked the executive committee to abstain from administering and managing day-to-day affairs of the federation.

The sports ministry took this decision on Sunday in view of the certain actions taken by the newly-elected EC after elections. The sports ministry was not happy with hasty announcement of nationals (U15 and U20). The ministry had written a letter to the Indian Olympic Association listing out its reason for such a step. The sports ministry also pointed out that the have taken "note of the compelling current situation arising out of the influence and control of the WFI's former office bearers, serious concerns have arisen about the governance and integrity of the WFI."

Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh during a press meet in New Delhi | PARVEEN NEGI

**Sakshi welcomes it**

Sakshi Malik welcomed the WFI's suspension. "It is the first step towards something good happening. I hope the government understands more for what cause we were fighting," she said. Bajrang Punia, who had returned his Padma Shri on Friday said he would not take it back as yet

The ministry has requested IOA to form an ad-hoc committee to run the affairs of the WFI. The ministry also felt that what they have done is within the Constitution of India and provisions in the Sports Code gives them that powers.

Though many were taken by surprise, former president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, the man in the eye of the storm, apparently had an inkling of what was in the store for him. Having left for Gonda, Uttar Pradesh only on Saturday morning, Brij Bhushan returned to New Delhi in the morning even before the order was issued. As the developments throughout the day caught the wrestling fraternity off guard, the BJP member of parliament refrained from commenting until he met the party's national president JP Nadda after which he told media that he is taking retirement from the sport. Sanjay Singh, Brij Bhushan's loyalist, comfortably won the elections for the top post. P13

CLASSROOM COMFORT

# Govt prohibits kids from sitting on floor in schools: Minister

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Shivamogga

TO promote the wellbeing and classroom comfort of school students, School Education and Literacy Minister **Madhu Bangarappa** on Sunday said the practice of making children sit on floors during class hours in school will be banned.

The directive, coming into effect from the next academic year, applies to all primary and high schools, both government and private grant-in-aid, and mandates the provision of benches for students sitting in classrooms.

The government will also ban children cleaning toilets. The fund allocation for maintaining school cleanliness will be increased, he added.

Explaining the reason for making benches compulsory at schools, he said that when he visited several schools during the recent legislature session in Belagavi, he sat with children, had midday meals and interacted with them. "I got the feedback from them. I felt bad when I saw children sitting on the floor during 'Nali Kali' class. I asked teachers not to wear footwear inside classrooms till new benches arrive. If we have to ensure equality, students should sit on the benches and study. The government will provide benches to government schools."

He said the government will fill up D group posts to clean toilets in schools, ensuring that children are not compelled to do it. "Forcing children to clean toilets is an inappropriate practice. While such incidents may not be widespread, they do occur in some places. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, during the recent cabinet meeting, emphasised the need to provide more facilities to schools. He also decided to fill up Group D posts," he added.

# I'm a patriot or a traitor, people will decide: Simha

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Mysuru

NEARLY two weeks after the Parliament security breach, where his name surfaced for issuing passes to the intruders, Mysuru-Kodagu MP Pratap Simha on Sunday said people will decide if he is a patriot or traitor in the upcoming Lok Sabha elections.

Reacting to him being tagged a 'traitor' during protests demanding a probe against him for security breach, Simha said, "Since the issue is being probed, I don't want to divulge anything regarding the incident. I will leave it to the Gods and people to decide whether I am a traitor or patriot." He said, "Goddess Chamundeshwari, Goddess Cauvery, my reader fans across Karnataka who have been reading my writings for the last two decades and people in the region who have elected me twice and seen my work for the last nine-and-a-half years will give their verdict through votes in the Lok Sabha polls."

Asked whether his statement was recorded by the police, Simha said he has done whatever had to be done. "I don't have anything else to say on this."

EXPRESS READ

**Jaishankar on 4-day Russia visit from today**

New Delhi: While this is the second year in a row that the India-Russia Summit has not been held, EAM Dr S Jaishankar is scheduled to visit Russia for four days from Dec 25. Jaishankar will meet with DyPM and Minister of Trade and Industry, Denis Manturov, and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov | P9

# Retd police officer shot dead in J&K mosque

FAYAZ WANI @ Srinagar

A retired police officer on Sunday was shot dead by terrorists while he was giving the call for morning prayer (*azaan*) in a mosque in Jammu and Kashmir's Baramulla district.

Mohammad Shafi Mir, 71, was shifted to a nearby hospital, where doctors declared him "brought dead". Immediately after the incident, a contingent of police, CRPF and army rushed to the area and launched a search operation to track down the attackers.

The postmortem of the deceased police officer has revealed that Mir was shot with a 12-bore rifle and had splinter injuries, police sources said. "We are investigating all angles including any possible rivalry," sources added. Mir, who retired as senior superintendent of police, regularly used to give the *azaan* at the local mosque.

He had retired in 2012 and was living in his native village. He is survived by wife, two sons and a daughter.

A pall of gloom descended the entire village as the news of his death spread and everyone is mourning.

**Karnataka sees 106 fresh Covid-19 cases**

Bengaluru: For the second consecutive day, Covid-19 positive cases in Karnataka crossed the 100-mark and stood at 106. The positivity rate jumped to 7.35%, breaching the 5%-mark, according to the health department. This is despite the low testing that is being done by the state health department. No deaths were reported | P3

THAT CHRISTMASSY FEELING

People attend the mass on Christmas Eve at St Mary's Basilica in Shivajinagar in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

# Plane bound to Nicaragua can leave, rule French judges

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

FRENCH judges on Sunday allowed the Nicaragua-bound flight carrying 303 passengers, mostly Indians, to resume its journey on Monday, according to French media. The A340 aircraft had taken off from Dubai and landed in Vatry for refuelling when it was grounded by French authorities over an anonymous tip about "human trafficking".

After authorising the aircraft, operated by Romanian company Legend Airlines, to leave, the French judges cancelled the hearings of the passengers due to irregularities in the procedure, French news broadcast television and radio network BFM TV reported.

Liliana Bakayoko, lawyer for the Romania-based airline, said the 15 crew members were questioned and released.

According to sources, most of the passengers, including minors, are from Punjab.

# ANOTHER VESSEL WITH INDIAN CREW STRUCK

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

A day after a Liberia-flagged merchant vessel M/V Chem Pluto carrying 21 Indian crew members came under a drone attack off the coast of Gujarat, the US Central Command (CENTCOM) said another merchant ship with 25 Indians came under attack in the southern Red Sea.

According to the US CENTCOM, the vessel, M/V SAIBABA, was hit by a one-way attack drone launched by Yemen-based Houthi militants in the southern Red Sea on Saturday. A Norwegian-flagged tanker was also similarly hit, but none of the crew members in either ship was injured. "At approximately 8 p.m. (Sanaa time), U.S. Naval Forces Central Command received reports from two ships in the Southern Red Sea that they were under attack," the US CENTCOM posted on X. US Navy's destroyer USS Laboon responded to the distress calls from the ships, it stated. The CENTCOM called M/V SAIBABA, "a Gabon-owned, Indian-flagged crude oil tanker", but Indian officials clarified it was a Gabon-flagged vessel. "These attacks represent the 14th and 15th attacks on commercial shipping by Houthi militants since October 17," the CENTCOM said.

On Saturday, the Indian Navy responded to a distress call from the merchant vessel M/V Chem Pluto, which came under a suspected drone attack. The US claimed Iran was behind Saturday's attack on M/V Chem Pluto. Citing newly released intelligence, the US said Iran was "deeply involved" in the planning of Houthi attacks and has supplied weapons to the group.

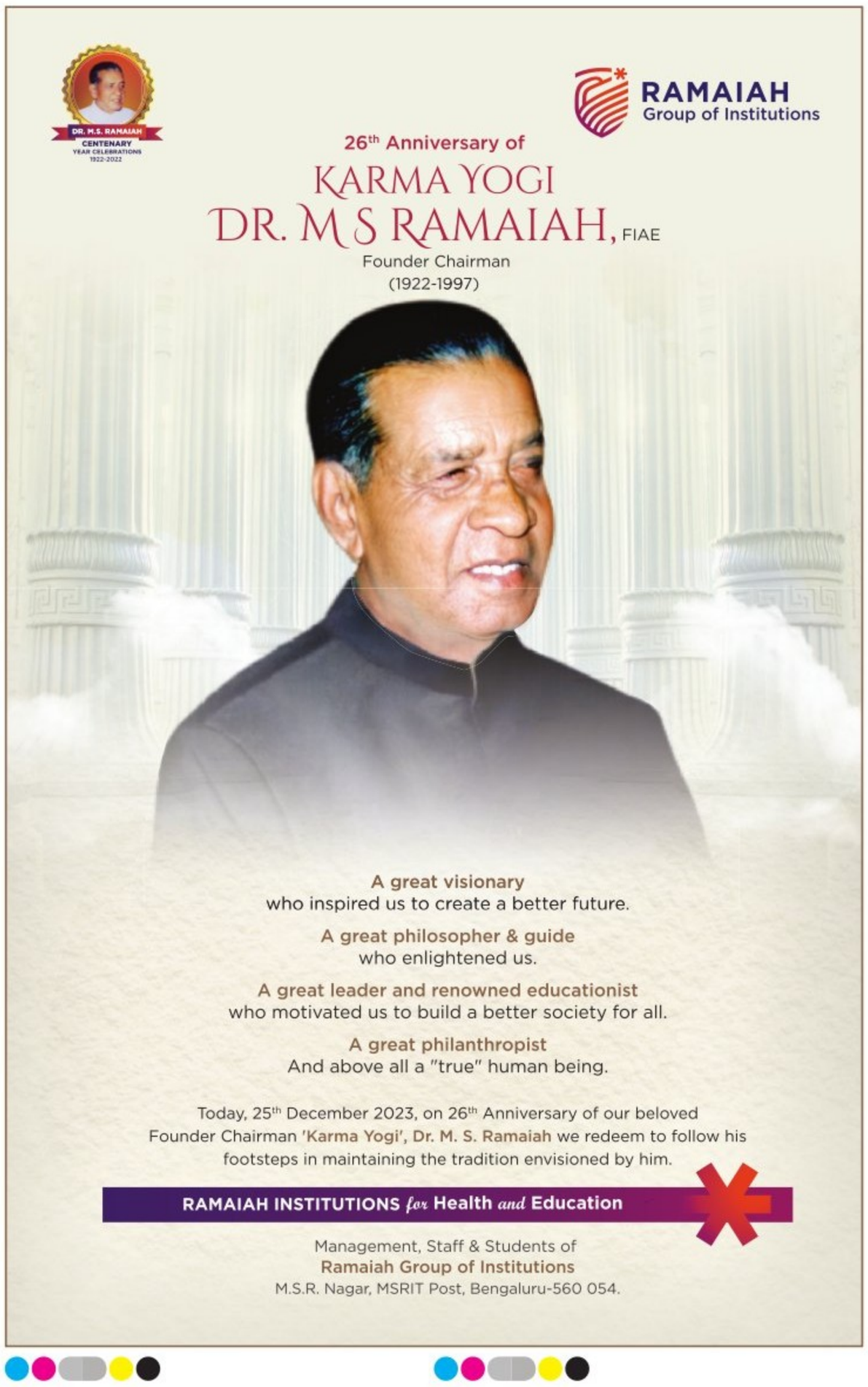
# Kerehalli held for questioning X'mas decor at mall

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ Bengaluru

RIGHT wing activist and cow vigilante Puneeth Kerehalli and four of his aides have been arrested by the Kodigehalli police after they allegedly questioned the staff of Mall of Asia in Byatarayanapura over decorating the mall for Christmas and charging Rs 200 as entry fee on Saturday.

The police said Kerehalli, president of Rashtriya Rakshana Pade, and four others went to the mall on Friday and questioned the staff for decorating the mall for Christmas. When the staff said it was the festive season, they allegedly questioned them whether they decorated the mall the same way for Hindu festivals. The accused also questioned the staff for charging ₹200 and allegedly tried to stop the visitors from entering the mall.

Despite the mall staff requesting them to leave, they allegedly used a loudspeaker asking the visitors not to enter the mall. When Stephen Victor, assistant security manager, intervened, they allegedly hurled abuses at him and accused him of supporting the mall as he is a Christian. They allegedly demanded that the mall should be decorated on January 22 when Ram Mandir will be inaugurated at Ayodhya and threatened to stage a protest in front of the mall on Christmas and New Year day, besides sloganeering 'Jai Sriram'. P4



DR. M.S. RAMAIAH
CENTENARY
YEAR CELEBRATIONS
1922-2022
RAMAIAH
Group of Institutions
26th Anniversary of
KARMA YOGI
DR. M S RAMAIAH, FIAE
Founder Chairman
(1922-1997)
A great visionary
who inspired us to create a better future.
A great philosopher & guide
who enlightened us.
A great leader and renowned educationist
who motivated us to build a better society for all.
A great philanthropist
And above all a "true" human being.
Today, 25th December 2023, on 26th Anniversary of our beloved Founder Chairman 'Karma Yogi', Dr. M. S. Ramaiah we redeem to follow his footsteps in maintaining the tradition envisioned by him.
RAMAIAH INSTITUTIONS for Health and Education
Management, Staff & Students of
Ramaiah Group of Institutions
M.S.R. Nagar, MSRIT Post, Bengaluru-560 054.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

# BENGALURU

ALMANAC TODAY
Monday: 25/12/2023 • Year: Shobhakruta • Ayana: Dakshinayana
Ritu: Himantha • Masa: Margashira • Paksha: Sukla • Tithi: Chaturdasi 4.58 am
Nakshatra: Rohini 9.36 pm • Moon in Mithuna Rashi • Rahukaala: 07:30 am to 09:00 am
Gulikakala: 01:30 pm to 03:00 pm • Yamaganda: 10:30 am to 12:00 pm

WEATHER 16°C MAX 29°C
FORECAST Scattered clouds

Sunrise 6.38 am
Sunset 6.00 pm
Moonrise 4.30 pm
Moonset 4.55 am



# Activists seek space for Kannada on boards

## Say residents of Bengaluru living on Kannada soil, earning livelihood here must respect Kannada

MOHAMMED YACOOB @Bengaluru

ALLEGING that the state government has failed to strictly implement the order that mandates all name boards to dedicate 65 per cent of display space to Kannada, Kannada activists, led by TA Narayana Gowda's Kannada Rakshana Vedike (KRV), have started a campaign for its implementation.

Kannada activists are going around in open vehicles, announcing that residents of Bengaluru are living on Kannada soil and earning their livelihoods here and they must respect Kannada and put up name boards with Kannada prominently.

The activists said that mall owners, instead of following the Shops and Commercial Establishments Act, 1961 (Rule 24-A), have filed cases against KRV and Kannada activists.

Narayana Gowda told TNIE that a massive awareness rally will be taken out from Sadahalli Gate near Kempegowda International Airport to Cubbon Park on December 27. "It is to highlight the failures of successive state governments and BBMP in implementing the relevant rules. Forget implementing the rules, the government has failed to protect Kannada activists as many cases have been filed against them for taking part in protests related to Cauvery water, Kalasa-Banduri project and now again for raising the voice against malls for not following the rules," said Gowda, adding that his team is reaching out to supporters across the state.

Gowda said he recently visited Phoenix Mall at Whitefield and Mall of Asia at Hebbal and asked them to follow the rules and give importance to Kannada. "But instead of following the rules, a case was filed against me by mall owners," he said.

Vedike State General Secretary Sanna Eranna said Narayana Gowda and other activists had visited and given letters asking malls to follow rules, but owners accused activists of threatening them and disrupting their business. "It has enraged Kannada activists and that is the reason the rally is being organised. We are expecting thousands of supporters to take part," he added.

The activists will also appeal to the state government to take action against commercial establishments that are not following the rules by discontinuing power and water connections and other facilities for insulting Kannada.

Commenting on the campaign, Brigade Shops and Establishments Association Secretary Suhail Yousuf said, "All the shops here have been told to follow the rules. Not just 65 per cent, all the 100 shops that are part of the association have displayed boards with 85 per cent space dedicated to Kannada."

### 2-MONTH ULTIMATUM GIVEN TO SHOPS TO PUT UP KANNADA NAME BOARDS

Bengaluru: BBMP Chief Commissioner Tushar Girinath who held a meeting with Kannada activists and BBMP officials here on Sunday gave an ultimatum of two months to shops and establishments in Bengaluru to fall in line by putting up name boards prominently in Kannada. Addressing the media after the meet, Girinath said, "A survey of all shops and establishments in the arterial and sub-arterial roads will be taken and they will be served with notices to fall in line within February 28 to put up boards with 60 per cent space for Kannada language and the rest for other languages." He said beyond the deadline, action will not only be initiated against shop owners but also on regional BBMP officials who are given the task to get the rule implemented in their respective zones. Commenting on the status of malls Girinath said, "Representatives of all leading malls will be called for a meeting. They will not be given two months, but approximately two weeks after the meeting to put up name boards in Kannada. Else action will be initiated against them."

## FESTIVE MOOD COMES ALIVE

(Left) Father Martin Kumar places a crib ahead of Christmas prayers at St Mary's Basilica at Shivajinagar in Bengaluru on Sunday. (Right) Artistes dressed as Hanuman perform on the occasion of Hanuma Jayanthi at Patala Anjaneya Temple in Bengaluru on Sunday | NAGARAJA GADEKAL, SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

# Lake buffer zone encroached to make illegal roads

MOHAMMED YACOOB @Bengaluru

DESPITE Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) bulldozing unauthorised buildings over Storm Water Drains (SWDs) and lake land in the past in the Mahadevapura zone, owners and developers near Pattandur Agrahara Lake have brazenly deployed vehicles and made an illegal road for an unauthorised layout that is coming up in Mahadevapura.

Activists say that, on the pretext of making the road to Sri Muneshwara temple, the developers are making such a road. According to revenue records, the said road is only a 'Kaludari' (walking path).

According to convenor of Namma Whitefield Sandeep Anirudhan, earlier land sharks had encroached on Pattandur Agrahara Lake. Civil society fought court battles to save the lake and filed two PILs. The tahsildar was helpful, and Bangalore Development Authority also filed a land grab case, and the State government filed a case against encroachers and got their claims stayed. The government also sanctioned Rs one crore to fence the lake in 2022.

"Officials of the lake department who had come to the last ward committee meeting said the revenue department has completed the survey of the lake boundary, and now based on the survey, the BBMP lake division will fence the lake area. Even before we can see the lake boundary fenced, attempts are made to build illegal roads on the lake buffer zone to connect to a new unauthorised layout in Whitefield," alleged Anirudhan.

Confirming the issue, Bengaluru East Tahsildar Ravi Y said, as soon as he got the information on Friday, he directed Revenue Inspector (RI) Partha Sarathy to inspect. "The RI has stopped the road work and asked developers to furnish the records. They claim it is 'kharab' land but we need to check the records, but even so, no road construction will be permitted in the lake buffer zone," he said. About the alleged unauthorised layout, the Executive Engineer of Mahadevapura Zone said, "The tahsildar needs to act. The revenue department needs to verify the conversion of land and BDA approval to develop the layout. If not, the layout formation is illegal and needs to be stopped."

# City prefers Metro tokens over QR code

S LALITHA @Bengaluru

DESPITE the QR mode of ticketing as well as the Contactless Smart Cards offering a 5% reduction in travel fare, a substantial chunk of Bengaluru Metro commuters still prefer a physical token over the digital options.

Executive Director, Operations and Maintenance, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited, AS Shankar, told TNIE, "We regularly popularise the newer travel facilities available which are faster and can be topped up on the move. However, a good number of commuters still prefer to queue up and use the token for travel crowding Metro stations."

Sharing data for the month of November, Shankar said that Metro had a total ridership of 1, 60, 66, 040. "Of the figure, 55, 54, 647 commuters have purchased a token. This is more than thrice the number of those who have used QR tickets - 18,76,894. The figure for Smart card users is 86,34,499."

BMRCL has recently launched a single QR ticket for upto a maximum of six commuters too.

There was a period post-Covid when card users encountered multiple glitches and many kept them as a back up and started buying tokens but those issues have been sorted out now.

Asked why tokens are still being used, a commuter Nitika Kumar, who uses Metro on and off said, "I really think buying a card makes sense if you are going to commute regularly. If not, why should I buy one and keep carrying it daily to use it on the rare day when I opt to use Metro. Buying a token whenever I travel and disposing it off makes a lot more sense to me."

Abdul Aleem, another commuter who does not travel frequently by Metro says, "I feel users who do not use the Metro frequently might feel that they are unnecessarily blocking a sum of Rs 50 on purchase of a card. More card users means more revenue for BMRCL. I really think they should consider waiving off the charge levied on the card."

EXPRESS READ

### BCU invites applications for M.Ed course

Bengaluru: Bengaluru City University (BCU) has invited applications from eligible Bachelor of Education Graduates for the Masters of Education (M.Ed) course offered at the university's affiliated colleges for the academic year 2023-24. The last date for online applications without a late fee is December 27, 2023. The merit list will be announced on January 3 and counselling will be on January 5. Interested candidates can apply through the UUCMS online portal by the user link https://uucms.karnataka.gov.in/Login/Index.

# Policy on sex education need of the hour, say experts

PURAN CHOUDHARY @Bengaluru

WHILE sex education remains taboo in many spaces, educational institutions in Karnataka want to take a positive step and say that a new approach is necessary. Colleges and experts want the government to take proactive measures and make comprehensive policies on sex education that are not limited to higher educational institutions (HEIs).

Ravi Sankar AV, Head of Department, School of Social Sciences and Humanities (SOSSH), CMR University said, the onus to introduce such policies lies on the State and Union governments. "If a policy such as this is implemented, we can expect pushback from some regressive societies... then this will remain a pipedream even for the Union Government to implement," he added.

Currently, there is a lack of understanding of sex, sexual health and comprehensive education on the matter in the education sector. Teachers often shy away from answering questions raised by youngsters and in higher educational institutions, professors skip chapters on the subject.

YSR Murthy, Vice-Chancellor, RV University, emphasised the fact that sex education cannot be approached in the same manner as other subjects as it demands delicate handling and the application of suitable pedagogical techniques. "Students come from diverse backgrounds, hailing from urban and rural settings, conservative and ultra-modern households, co-educational to all male or female institutions. In light of this heterogeneous context, educational institutions need to dovetail their offerings," he said.

Most of the experts TNIE spoke to said institutions need to hire professionals to take these classes. Specialists with enough knowledge, expertise and a clear vision should be roped in. Case studies from different scenarios, audio-visual aids, news stories from across the country and statistics can make the subject interesting the drive home the point.

Purnima Venkat, Assistant Professor, TA Pai Management Institute, Manipal, said, "For adequate coverage of the message to the larger audience, using the vernacular is very important. This not only covers a larger population but also includes families and parents in this message." She added that the communicators in this process are largely teachers in government schools and colleges who need tremendous support and handholding. "Sex education should be a part of the school and college curriculum. We introduced personal safety chapters in Telangana government school textbooks, which talk about good and bad touch, though it's not complete sex education, it's a start. The conversation also needs to be gender inclusive on a non-binary level. The concepts of gender and sexuality need to be made grade and age-appropriate," said Sangeeta Saksena, co-founder, Enfold, Proactive Health Trust, which works closely on imparting sex education.

# Daily Starscope

PETER VIDAL

**25TH December: Today is the ancient festival of the Unconquered Sun. And let us remember that for Christians it is the sacred birthday of Jesus Christ. From today, if we are in the north, then the amount of daylight each day begins to increase, and darkness decreases. Of course, if you live close to the equator there will be no change to see.**

**ARIES** (Mar 21 - Apr. 20)
You may be feeling slightly miffed at the behaviour of someone who appears to have little regard for your financial status or earnings, yet the continuing presence of Mars in your sign reveals that the time is fast approaching when you will be proved to have been right.

**TAURUS** (Apr. 21 - May 21)
Concern about your emotional well-being may be aroused by secret worries. Yet under current planetary influences you've a golden opportunity to deal with any lingering problems and get into shape for the coming months. Venus, that most affectionate planet, is receiving plenty of support, so you should reach your goals.

**GEMINI** (May 22 - June 21)
Pluto's continuing challenge to your sign is really quite wearing and, right now, there seems little doubt about the necessity for compromise, whether you want to or not. It may take a show of generosity to win you over. Partners have the best ideas, by the way, so sit back and listen.

**CANCER** (June 22 - July 23)
Traditionally, Cancer is considered an artistic sign; yet all too often you have ignored creative aspirations that need to be expressed and talents that should be developed. Over the next fortnight why don't you look for ways to make up for all that lost time?

**LEO** (July 24 - Aug. 23)
You learnt many years ago that life is not always easy, but that sometimes it's periods of stress which result in the greatest success and ultimately personal satisfaction and happiness. So don't let current problems disturb you any more than is necessary.

**VIRGO** (Aug. 24 - Sept. 23)
Although you often adopt a high moral stance, in practice you are easily seduced into spreading gossip which may be baseless, or in harming other people's interests through ill-considered secret activities. Try to be more open and honest, and don't let rivals get under your skin.

**LIBRA** (Sept. 24 - Oct. 23)
By now the situation in your second solar house reveals that your financial affairs could well be in a muddle, but if you're in a state of uncertainty this reflects the fact that there are a number of different options before you. Professional adjustments should be nearing completion.

**SCORPIO** (Oct. 24 - Nov. 22)
The winds of change are blowing through at least one major area of your life and you may be wondering where it will all end. The truth is that the current rash of alterations and adjustments should come to an end within a month. As soon as that happens, you'll be able to plan your next step.

**SAGITTARIUS** (Nov. 23 - Dec. 22)
Much of what is going on behind the scenes will undoubtedly be to your benefit if only you would sit back and let certain events take their natural course. There may be a number of delays, but nothing you can't handle by calling on your creative skills.

**CAPRICORN** (Dec. 23 - Jan. 20)
Social influences are definitely working in your favour, and if you're unhappy with the attitude or behaviour of someone with whom you're closely involved, why not take the bull by the horns, bring tensions to the surface and make certain that everyone is reassured.

**AQUARIUS** (Jan. 21 - Feb. 19)
If you haven't already done so it's absolutely essential that you take practical and hard-headed decisions. Even though there may be one or two hold-ups today, you must press ahead with your original schedule. Try to cut down on financial costs before they spin out of control.

**PISCES** (Feb. 20 - Mar 20)
Jupiter, your benevolent ruling planet, doesn't seem to know whether it wants to help you with your current plans or force you to take a different course altogether. The truth is, you must try and keep all the alternatives in mind. I know that's a tall order, but I also know that if anyone can do it, you can.

Solutions to Saturday's puzzle

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| 7 | | | | 5 | 4 | 9 | 3 | 6 |
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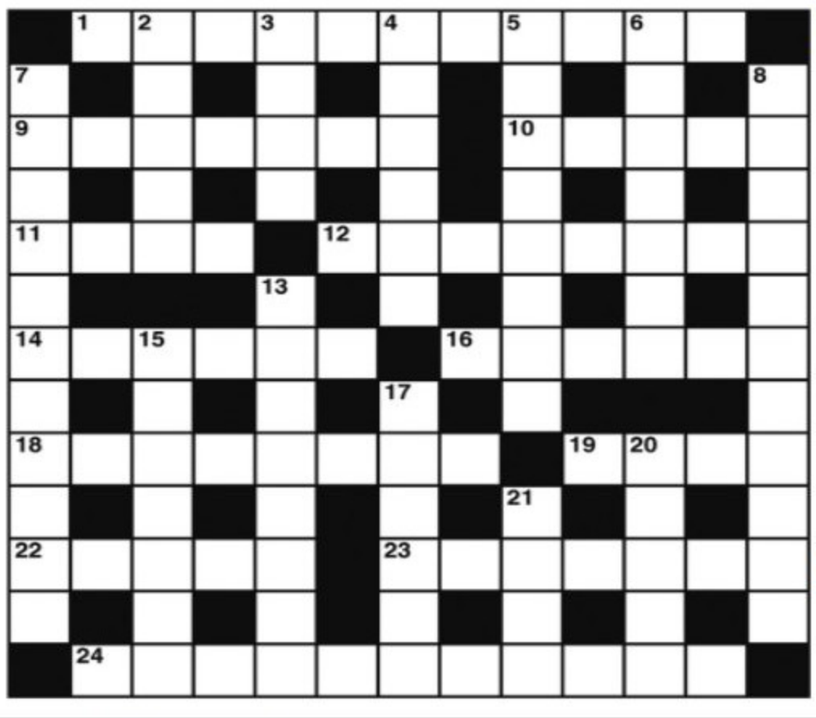
| 1 | 8 | 5 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 2 | 9 |
| 3 | 1 | 8 | 2 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 7 | 5 |
| 5 | 7 | 2 | 1 | 8 | 6 | 3 | 9 | 4 |
| 4 | 6 | 9 | 7 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 8 |

SUDOKU EASY

TEST YOUR NUMBER CRUNCHING SKILL WITH OUR UNIQUE PUZZLE



## CROSS WORD

**ACROSS**
1 Philanthropists throwing coins in the water? (4-7)
9 A support thus returned is appropriate (7)
10 A moss-strewn island of Greece (5)
11 Misfortunes we keep well away from (4)
12 Agreeable countryman about fifty (8)
14 Take some back to quarters (6)
16 Very much the opposite (6)
18 Agree to fight the case (8)
19 Prune spruce (4)
22 Find answer to love's torment (5)
23 Little Sarah always gets in a few (7)
24 Giveaway merchants who don't want custom? (4,7)

**DOWN**
2 Record membership (5)
3 They may part with a smile (4)
4 Offence committed in sunlit setting (6)
5 I can ship out from Spain (8)
6 Fierce sheep starts to breathe heavily (7)
7 For him it's mostly filling in time at work (11)
8 Mother sails out in signs of similar weather (11)
13 Fabric obtained for ready money only (8)
15 In France you change later for protection (7)
17 Cat lands us in more trouble (6)
20 Two kings embracing are not seen so often (5)
21 Keen to upset a singer (4)

**SATURDAY'S SOLUTIONS**

**Across:** 1 Action, 4 Idle talk, 9 Claire, 10 Ramparts, 12 Lips, 13 Cache, 14 Knee, 17 Disagreeable, 20 Mother tongue, 23 Ewer, 24 Amend, 25 Spur, 28 Tea chest, 29 Senior, 30 Radiance, 31 Stance.

**Down:** 1 Accolade, 2 Trappist, 3 Oars, 5 Death warrant, 6 Espy, 7 Airing, 8 Kismet, 11 Face the music, 15 Igloo, 16 Allot, 18 Egyptian, 19 Pear tree, 21 Neuter, 22 Relaid, 26 Thea, 27 Next.

## JUMBLE

UNSCRAMBLE THESE JUMBLES, ONE LETTER TO EACH SQUARE, TO FORM FOUR ORDINARY WORDS.

BY DAVID L. HOYT AND JEFF KNUREK

TUBOA

PTAOD

RYNLUU

FWRUCE

I needed the extra time to practice.
It beats working.
Get the free JUST JUMBLE app • Follow us on Twitter @PlayJumble
10/21
THEY WEREN'T TEEING OFF FOR AN HOUR, SO THEY WENT TO THE PRACTICE GREEN TO ---

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Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

(Answers tomorrow)

Saturday's Jumbles: LADLE NEEDY MORTAL INCOME
Answer: The patient who was being so rude to the hospital staff was — ILL-MANNERED

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

# BENGALURU

03 BENGALURU | MONDAY 25.12.2023 | newindianexpress.com

The forest department has extended the timings of the Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary in Srirangapatna. The sanctuary will remain open for tourists from 6am to 5.30pm. DCF Saurabh Kumar said the timings have been extended from December 25 to January 2 to help tourists to enjoy the boat ride and sightings of migratory birds in the sanctuary across the Cauvery river

HOLIDAY RUSH

Mysuru Road saw heavy vehicle congestion for second consecutive day owing to the extended weekend, on Sunday. People from Bengaluru are thronging tourist spots in and around Mysuru, Kodagu and Ooty to usher in Christmas and the New Year | SHASHIDHAR BYRAPPA

CRIME PATROL

## Auto driver hacked to death at Lakkasandra

BENGALURU: A 39-year-old man with criminal antecedents was hacked to death at Lakkasandra while he was distributing food on the occasion of Hanuma Jayanti near a Anjaneya temple on Sunday. The police identified the victim as Jai Prakash, an autorickshaw driver. Four to five armed assailants, who are said to be known to Prakash, came near him, who after seeing them ran to a nearby restaurant where he was attacked with lethal weapons. The miscreants fled the spot after committing the murder. Jai Prakash had a murder case registered against him and was previously arrested, the police added. The Adugodi police have registered a case of murder and are investigating. The incident took place close to the residence of Karnataka Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy. **ENS**

# Lying unused, $O_2$ plants in govt hosps defunct now

State has 50 such units, total cost spent on it is over Rs 150 crore

**BANSY KALAPPA AND NAUSHAD BIJAPUR** @ Bengaluru, Belagavi, Bagalkot, Kalaburagi

EVEN as the state government is on alert over the increasing number of Covid cases, Pressure Swing Absorption (PSA) plants that generate medical grade oxygen to treat critical Covid patients are not working in different parts of the state.

Despite spending at least Rs 1 crore on each unit about 3-4 years ago, when the pandemic was at its peak, they are now in sad state of disrepair, lying unused in most government hospitals. The state has 50 such units and the total cost spent on it was over Rs 150 crore.

A medical practitioner, requesting anonymity, said, "You need proper teams to maintain them. But there has been no maintenance for the last two years."

Health department sources said, "These plants were set up during the pandemic to ensure that hospitals become fully self-sufficient in medical oxygen generation. The idea was to generate enough medical oxygen to meet the needs of hospitals without burdening the grid."

They said, "But there is a problem with human resources, especially the technical and paramedical staff, across the health delivery system. During peak Covid, the state government recruited paramedical staff in large numbers, but removed them when the number of cases started coming down and none has been maintained since."

Venkatesh Nayak, Director, Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative, Delhi who obtained information through an RTI from the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, told *The New Indian Express*, "Studies have revealed that the oxygen PSA plants are not always in a proper functional condition. The government must publish real time data about the preparedness of these oxygen generation facilities in all hospitals, particularly now when there is a scare of the new Covid-19 variant JN.1 spreading rapidly. The transactions of the Prime Minister Cares Fund are most opaque of all such public charitable trusts, because the government has refused to bring the fund under RTI which has been challenged."

When contacted, Medical Education Minister Sharan Prakash Patil told *The New Indian Express*, "I had a video conference with our officers two days ago on the same issue. I asked them for a status report on the plants to find out if they are functioning effectively. Our interest is to see that they are functional and we will see to it that they are all perfectly operational."

Top sources in the Health Department claimed that oxygen plants set up in Belagavi, Bagalkot and Kalaburagi districts are functional and can be put to effective use if the situation arises. However when asked if they can demonstrate the units' effective functioning on Monday, the authorities said they can do it only on Tuesday.

*(With inputs from Sunil Patil, Ramakrishna Badseshi and Firoz Rozindar)*

### 106 fresh Covid cases in K'taka

For the second consecutive day, Covid-19 positive cases in Karnataka crossed the 100-mark and stood at 106. The positivity rate jumped to 7.35%, breaching the 5%-mark. While Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao had directed health officials to touch 5,000 tests from Saturday onwards, the number of tests conducted on Sunday were a mere 1,441.The total number of active cases in Karnataka is now 344. There are 323 in home isolation

**VIRUS IN NUMBERS (AS ON DEC 24, 2023)**

| | |
|---|---|
| 106 Total positive cases | 344 Total active cases(7 in ICU, 14 in general ward, 323 in-home isolation) |
| 0 Deaths | |
| 1,441 TOTAL TESTS | |
| 7.35% POSITIVITY RATE | |

FLYING HIGH

# Int'l pax traffic in Nov continues to soar at KIA

**S LALITHA** @Bengaluru

KEMPEGOWDA International Airport (KIA) continues its upward surge in terms of passengers with a total of 30,75,234 domestic and international flyers recorded in November 2023. This marks an 8.6% over passenger traffic with the corresponding month last year. The Airports Authority of India (AAI) says 310.31 lakh passengers have flown in and out of the country last month and marks an overall 10.7% increase over November 2022.

AAI's latest report detailing air traffic for all Indian airports says Bengaluru airport has recorded 3,98,792 international flyers in November, which is a healthy surge of 14.5% over a similar period last year. A total of 26,76,442 domestic passengers flew during the period, marking a 7.8% increase over a similar period. The report says 2,403 International Air Traffic Movements (total of all arrival and departure aircraft) have been recorded in November this year as compared to 2,161 ATMs in the previous year. It is fast catching up with Cochin airport which has recorded 70 ATMs more while Hyderabad airport is just 60 ATMs behind it. It easily beats the other two international airports of the South in domestic ATMs with 18,160 recorded as against 12,332 by Hyderabad and 3,153 by Cochin.

Karnataka's only other international airport at Mangaluru has increased its domestic ATMs by 33.2% this November over last- 1,022 vs 767. However, on the international front it has had a major dip of 22.4% with just 266 movements recorded.

The newest airport in Karnataka, Shivamogga which commenced operations on August 31 this year is showing a gradual increase in patronage. While it had just 145 passengers for the single day it operated in August, the number went up to 3,247 in September, 3,338 in October and touched 4,622 flyers in November.

Mangaluru had 1,38, 953 domestic flyers and 40,045 international flyers, an increase of 38.6% and a dip by 9% respectively over last year's November figures. Hubballi had 31,447 passengers marking just a 2.6% increase while Belagavi recorded a terrific surge of flyers of 44.7% recording 32,059 passengers in November 2023 as against 22,149 in Nov 2022. A senior airport official predicted that patronage would pick up hugely at the airport after the daily flight between Belagavi and Delhi by Indigo was launched on October 5.

Kalaburagi had a 31.2% dip in flyers with just 4,823 using the airport last month as against 7,015 recorded in the same period last year while Mysuru airport patronage slips into four digits with a 30.2% dip with 8,878 last month as against 12,716 in November 2022.

# 22-year-old fabricator kills co-worker for forcing to work more, arrested

**RISHITA KHANNA** @Bengaluru

THE Begur police have arrested a 22-year-old fabricator from Varanasi for allegedly murdering his co-worker recently for putting pressure on him to work more.

Police said the accused, identified as Dilkhush, had come to the city three months ago. He was working at a building in Devarachikkanahalli (DC Halli) as a fabricator with Gulfam, a native of Murshidabad village in Bareilly, Uttar Pradesh. Gulfam, who claimed to have more work experience, used to exerted pressure on Dilkhush to work more. The duo reportedly had frequent arguments over working hours.

Agitated over this, Dilkhush bludgeoned Gulfam's head with a stone when the latter was sleeping at the building. The incident happened came to light when Gulfam's relative who had been residing in the city filed a missing person's complaint with Begur police, police added.

Police got suspicious when Dilkhush left for Varanasi after the crime. Moreover, Dilkhush was the only one who had been staying at the building with Gulfam.

Within 24 hours, police personnel went to Varanasi and nabbed Dilkhush from his residence. During the investigation, Dilkhush admitted to his offense and said he killed Gulfam because he felt over burdened with work.

The Begur police have registered a case of murder.

## *Man-son duo injured in cylinder explosion dies, three critical*

BENGALURU: Two persons, including a two-and-a-half-year-old toddler, lost their life following a cylinder explosion at their residence in Garvebhavi Palya while the remaining three family members are currently under treatment. The police said the incident happened on December 19 and it is suspected that one of the family members, Nikhila, 26, forgot to switch off the gas regulator after she prepared food on Monday night. On Tuesday, at around 7 am, the deceased, Sandesh, a domestic worker, woke up and lit the gas which resulted in the cylinder blast. The mishap happened because of gas release as the regulator was left switched on the whole night. Sandesh, his child Roshan, and three other family members, including his sister-in-law, Nikhila, and other two children, Roshini and Rohan, were injured in the incident and were rushed to a private hospital. They were later shifted to Victoria Hospital where Sandesh and Roshan died while they were under treatment on Sunday morning, the police said, adding that the other family members who are currently getting the treatment are in a critical condition. The Begur police have registered a case of unnatural death. **ENS**

MATTER OF CONCERN

# *'Depression among mothers affects children's mental health'*

**NAMRATA SINDWANI** @Bengaluru

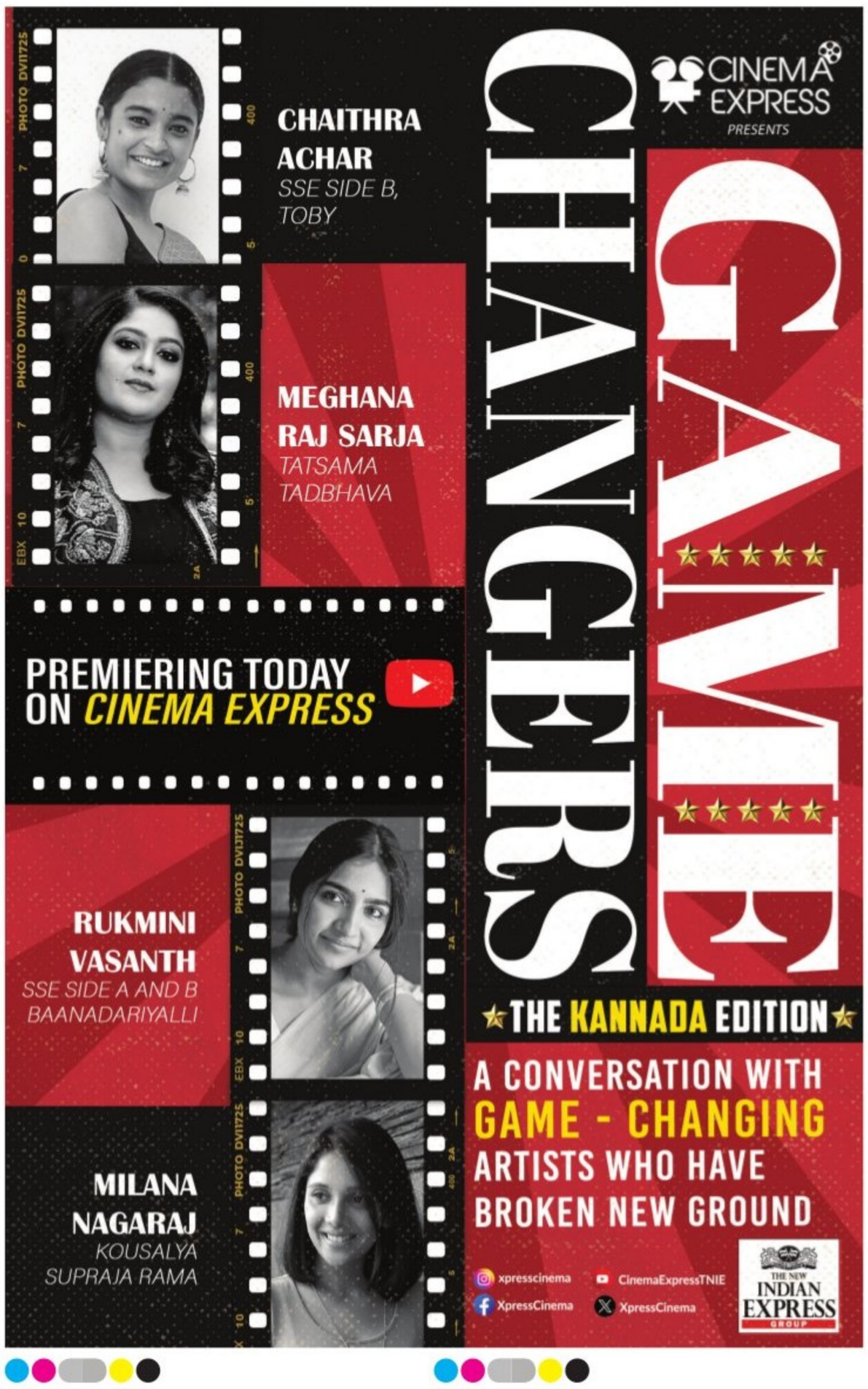
Pregnant mothers suffering from anxiety or depression are proven to be transferring their stress to their unborn children, affecting their health.

Dr Prabha Chandra, Dean of Faculty (Behavioural Sciences), National Institute of Mental Health and Neurosciences (Nimhans) has been leading the Maternal and Child Mental Health Study - Bangalore Child Health and Development Study (BCHADS), studying maternal and child cohort with detailed mental health and developmental assessment from pregnancy till middle childhood.

The BCHADS study initiated in 2016 will be completed in 2024. The doctors studied the behavioural patterns of 912 women across multiple public health centres (PHCs) in Bengaluru and found that women suffering from anxiety and depression had children with low birth weight. Also, factors like domestic violence or passive smoking were studied to identify their effect on the health of the mother and child. It was observed that domestic violence, which many women faced, including pregnant women and second-hand smoke were possible reasons for pre-term delivery or behavioral differences in the children.

Dr Chandra added that a mother's surroundings, including the behaviour of the father and grandparents, affect prenatal and postnatal stress. Since the burden of mental health disorders has also increased among children, this research will continue to study behavioural patterns among children till middle childhood. The BCHADS is linked to the UK Wirral Child Health and Development Study (WCHADS) with parallel timing of assessment and measurement. "The studies are designed with common measurement in the UK (WCHADS) and India (BCHADS) so we can test whether certain risk and protective factors contribute to the development of child mental health problems in both settings," the University of Liverpool stated.

With the burden of mental health disorders becoming more prevalent, especially among children in India, the researchers have highlighted the urgent need for culturally sensitive studies of community samples starting in pregnancy, examining the earliest signs of child mental health issues to take interventional measures accordingly.



Kempegowda International Airport continues its upward surge in terms of passengers with a total of 30,75,234 domestic and international flyers recorded in November 2023. This marks an 8.6% over passenger traffic with the corresponding month last year

# CRACKS APPEAR AS BYV ALLIES BAG MOST PARTY SLOTS

State BJP chief will be on shaky ground if team comes short of even one seat in LS polls, says Yatnal

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

FORMER chief minister B S Yediyurappa's son, B Y Vijayendra, who had faced dissidence when he was appointed BJP state chief with senior leaders Basanagouda Patil Yatnal and V Somanna opposing the party top brass' move, is again caught in the cross-hairs of certain party leaders.

With a majority of his followers getting appointed as party office-bearers, there are rumblings in a section of leaders who are unhappy with the development.

"Yediyurappa had quit the BJP and floated KJP-1. Now, Vijayendra has formed KJP-2 and it may survive till the 2024 LS polls. He had promised to ensure that the party wins all the 28 seats. If he falls short by even one seat, he will be removed from the president's

post," said Yatnal.

According to sources, out of 32 office-bearers, including ten vice-presidents and secretaries each, and four general secretaries, at least 25 are either supporters of Yediyurappa or sympathisers of Vijayendra. One of the vice presidents, M Rajendra, and Backward Classes Morcha president Raghu Koutilya, both from Mysuru, secretary Lalitha Anapura, women's wing president C Manjula, Yuva Morcha president and Doddaballapura MLA Dhiraj Muniraju, SC Morcha president and Sakaleshpura MLA Cement Manju were in the coterie of Vijayendra who wants him to be the next CM of Karnataka if the party returns to power, sources said.

Except for Vinay Bidare as secretary and M Rajendra as vice-president, who were retained in their posts they had held previously, all office-bearers were new faces.

"Obviously, the top brass has given a go-ahead to Vijayendra's team of office-bearers with a task of ensuring the party winning more seats in the LS polls. Like his father, Vijayendra has understood the caste equation and formed his team for the future," an office-bearer told *TNIE*.

"This team is not an incompetent one. But there are slight differences here and there. Before appointing them, the national leaders should have come and sat down with the senior leaders of the state," said former Union minister and Bengaluru North MP DV Sadananda Gowda.

### MEET TOMORROW

Amidst the criticism, Vijayendra has called a meeting of the new office-bearers at the party's office in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

Defending the party's move, he claimed that while appointing the office-bearers, different communities and sects as well as Mumbai-Karnataka, Kittur-Karnataka and Kalyan-Karnataka regions were given representation besides giving priority to youth. "We have a big challenge before us to fight the ruling Congress party in the state and the BJP and JDS alliance should win all the 28 constituencies to strengthen the hands of Prime Minister Narendra Modi," he said.

He alleged that Chief Minister Siddaramaiah was playing with the future of children over the hijab issue by sowing seeds of caste in the minds of the students. "The chief minister made a U-turn that he had not said that his government will withdraw the ban on hijab. But the people of the state have noticed everything. BJP will take to the streets and fight if such a situation arises," he said.

He asked Siddaramaiah as to why he was in a hurry as the case on hijab is in the Supreme Court. "Realising that the Congress will not win even a single seat, Siddaramaiah out of frustration has resorted to a strategy of withdrawing the ban on hijab," he remarked.

He said he has discussed the BJP-JDS alliance with JDS chief H D Kumaraswamy in New Delhi and the duo will resolve certain issues face to face as early as possible.a

# Drought year for Karnataka, farmers, people face distress

ASHWINI M SRIPAD

THE year 2023 will go down as the worst drought year in Karnataka. Although the state recorded 16 drought years since 2001 till now, it witnessed the lowest rainfall in the last 123 years. This year, both the Southwest and Northeast monsoons recorded less rainfall, resulting in 223 of 236 taluks being declared drought-hit.

This year, the state also saw a 'green drought'. When the inter-ministerial Central team came to Karnataka to assess the drought situation, Revenue Minister Krishna Byregowda and Agriculture Minister N Cheluvarayaswamy had explained what a 'green drought' is. "In some places, there is green cover, but the yield has come down. We have informed the Central team of this 'green drought', which is unusual," Byregowda had stated.

Karnataka received 642mm of rain during the Southwest monsoon (June to September) as against 852mm of actual rainfall. This year, even the Northeast monsoon failed. The state has 13 reservoirs that supply water for irrigation and drinking purposes, but water reduced drastically compared to previous years, putting pressure on the state government to reserve water for drinking, which has been the priority.

Farmers, who were at the mercy of the rain gods, were disappointed and devastated. On one side, there was no rain and the dam levels hit rock bottom, and on the other, there was no fodder for their cattle. While some could not sow in the beginning of the monsoon as they did not receive sufficient rain, those who did saw their crops wilting due to lack of rain.

When the harvest season came around, those who did sow and were able to sustain their crops, saw a drastically reduced yield, putting further pressure on farmers.

This resulted in reduction in foodgrain production from the expected 148 lakh tonnes of grain to around 80 lakh MT. This will also result in an increase in the price of commodities.

Farmers who faced the double whammy of two failed monsoons in 2023, now have no option other than waiting till next year, hoping it would be better than the one gone by.

### CM SEEKS 18K CR RELIEF

Recently, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah met Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi and sought Rs 18,177 crore in assistance for drought relief work in the state. Siddaramaiah also insisted that PM Modi direct Union Home Minister Amit Shah to hold an emergency meeting of the high-powered committee and take immediate steps to release funds to tackle drought. In his letter, the CM mentioned crop loss on 46.11 lakh hectares of agri lands and 2.06 lakh hectares of horticulture land.

### COMPENSATION POLITICS

Relief compensation for crop loss took a political turn when the State government blamed the Centre for not giving appointments earlier when they sought time to explain the situation and later complained about not paying compensation. BJP leaders, on the other side, said the State government should have paid compensation from its treasury immediately and then compensate it with Central relief funds. BJP leaders also alleged that the State government has spent money on guarantee schemes, that has resulted in shortage of funds.

**FARMER SUICIDES**

**456** farmers died by suicide from June to November, shows official data

**354** farmers eligible for compensation

321 farmers got compensation of Rs 16.05 crore; 33 yet to be compensated

**CAUVERY ROW**

In September, a bandh was called by pro-Kannada activists opposing the government's decision to release water from the Cauvery river to Tamil Nadu. Meanwhile, Cauvery Water Regulation Committee (CWRC) has been directing the Karnataka government to release water to Tamil Nadu, while farmers in Mysuru, Mandya and Ramanagara region face distress.

# Cong will learn lesson in polls: Vijayendra

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Gadag

THE Congress government has not been coming forward to help and support farmers by always hiding behind the ruse that the Centre has not been giving it funds, said BJP state president B Y Vijayendra.

Speaking to reporters here on Sunday, he said, "The Central government gave an opportunity to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to meet Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Did he go there for a fashion show? People will teach the Congress a lesson in the Lok Sabha polls."

Vijayendra said the BJP will instill confidence in youth and women and the party will bag 28 seats in the state.

"Recently, I had an opportunity to participate in a two-day special meeting with BJP National President J P Nadda, PM Modi and Home Minister Amit Shah in New Delhi. We were told about how to train party workers. The PM sat for five hours with all of us amid his busy schedule," he added.

Taking the Congress government to task, Vijayendra said it is shameful that even after Belagavi witnessed the case of a woman who was assaulted and paraded naked, the CM did not pay a visit there.

To a query on the statement by Congress leader Jagdish Shetter on separate religion tag for the Lingayat community, Vijayendra said one should talk about uniting people, not dividing them. "(Deputy Chief Minister) DK Shivakumar apologised in Ballari over this. The entire state knows that the Congress tried to separate Veerashivas and Lingayats," he said.

Former CM BS Yediyurappa being felicitated by MLA Dr Shamanur Shivashankarappa and Ujjini Swamiji during the Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha on Sunday. Right: BJP state president BY Vijayendra gets a rousing welcome on the outskirts of Davanagere city | EXPRESS

# Will not rest till BJP comes to power: State chief

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Davanagere

STATE BJP president BY Vijayendra on Sunday said the Congress suddenly remembers the caste-based socio-economic survey only when it senses defeat in elections.

Addressing media persons on the sidelines of the 24th Akhila Bharata Veerashaiva Lingayat Mahasabha here on Sunday, he stressed that there is a need to ensure social justice for backward classes. "But by implementing the Kantharaj Commission report, the CM is attempting to sow hatred in society and create division between various castes. The BJP will not tolerate these caste-based divisions," he added.

Vijayendra also pledged that he will not rest till the BJP wins the 2024 Lok Sabha Election. "There is a big challenge before the BJP in the state and the new team has given me immense strength to fight against the anti-people policies of the Congress. The pre-poll alliance of the BJP and JDS helps them win the maximum parliamentary constituencies in the 2024 general elections," the Shikaripura MLA added.

The BJP state president also said the newly formed State BJP executive committee meeting will be held on Tuesday . "We will not rest till the BJP comes to power at the Centre. Narendra Modi should become prime minister of the country for the third successive time and people of Karnataka will play a major role in this."

Vijayendra said farmers of the state have started criticising the Congress government in state within just six months of coming to power, which indicates the anti-people policies of the government.

Earlier, Vijayendra, who visited Davanagere city for the first time after becoming BJP state president, received a rousing reception. Later, he was taken to the programme venue in a motorcade. He called upon BJP workers to strengthen the party and bring the party to power.

# Hijab, religious issues to take centrestage in LS polls

DEVARAJ B HIREHALLI @ Bengaluru

THE controversy surrounding Chief minister Siddaramaiah's statement on lifting the ban on students wearing hijab at educational institutions, though later withdrawn, is unlikely to die down anytime soon. It seems to have set the tone for the fight between Congress and BJP in the run-up to the 2024 Lok Sabha elections.

BJP leaders, keeping their differences aside, came down heavily upon the chief minister for the statement. MLA Basanagouda Patil Yatnal went on to say that he will give a call to Hindu students to wear saffron shawls to institutions if the Congress government lifts the ban on hijab. Congress MLC BK Hariprasad provided BJP with further ammo when he termed "haters" of Mysuru ruler Tipu Sultan as "boot lickers of the British".

RSS leader Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat, taking part in Hanuma Jayanti celebrations in Mandya, termed Siddaramaiah's decision treasonous and warned of an intense struggle against Congress. Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara, meanwhile on Sunday, alleged that BJP is trying to use these issues as a weapon during the Lok Sabha elections. "But it will not work," he commented.

Parameshwara was the manifesto committee chairman for the May 10, 2023 assembly polls, in which the ban on Bajrang Dal was included at the last minute, triggering a controversy. Along with the promise of guarantees, this too worked in favour of Congress as Muslims by and large voted for Congress, helping it win 135 seats.

"Since Muslims have already polarised in favour of Congress, religious issues, like withdrawing the ban on hijab, will not help that party more. Instead, it may boomerang pushing Hindus towards BJP in the Lok Sabha elections," a political analyst said.

Former CM BS Yediyurappa said Siddaramaiah's statement is a strategy to divert the attention. Interestingly, JDS, the alliance partner of BJP, has not commented on the issue.

> *Hijab is not a question about Hindus or Muslims, but there is something called dress code which needs to be followed*
>
> Pratap Simha, BJP MP

# 'Rahul's influence behind Siddu remark'

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Hubballi

UNION Law and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi on Sunday said Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's statement over the hijab issue is condemnable as no one has banned it.

"Siddaramaiah often makes makes such faux pas when he returns after meeting his leader Rahul Gandhi. It is the influence of Rahul Gandhi that makes the CM talk in such a way," he told reporters here. "The CM should know about the facts of the issue. If not, he should not comment or react. Siddaramaiah is unfit to be CM."

Joshi said Siddaramaiah is trying to create division between communities by making irrelevant statements. "It is a fact that one has to follow the dress code in educational institutions. If he is giving such statements purposely, he is trying to create friction between communities to consolidate votes," the minister added. Joshi said a few girls have taken the matter to the Supreme Court and the court's decision should be followed. "People are smart and they know what is happening in the nation. They will teach a lesson," he added.

# Mall staff alerted police

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

THE mall staff alerted the police, who rushed to the spot and took the five into custody. Based on Victor's complaint, the Kodigehalli police registered an ,FIR booking the accused for making statements inducing public mischief, criminal intimidation, wrongful restraint, unlawful assembly and hurting religious feelings.

Puneeth Kerehalli and his aides were arrested by the Sathanur police in Kanakapura of Ramanagara district in April for allegedly lynching a cattle transporter, in an alleged case of cow vigilantism. The police had also booked him under the Goonda Act in August and was released in September as the State Advisory Board's cited lack of sufficient grounds to book him under the law.

CLOSE CALL

### Byrathi's chopper makes emergency landing

Chitradurga: A technical snag in the helicopter carrying Urban Development Minister Byrathi Suresh forced it to make an emergency landing at Haranakatte village of Hiriyur on Sunday. Despite the technical issue, the pilot managed to land the helicopter safely in an agriculture field. The chopper had taken off at 10.15 am and was flying over Hiriyur taluk when it developed the glitch. Suresh, who was on his way to Gadag to attend the Kanaka Jayanti programme, later reached Gadag by road. **ENS**

## *BJP INSULTED LORD RAM, WILL BE SLAYED LIKE RAVANA: CONG*

Bengaluru: The Congress has slammed the Karnataka BJP over a poster on Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Lord Ram, terming it an insult to the lord. In a post, the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee stated that the BJP in Karnataka will be destroyed by Lord Ram like Ravan. The state unit of the BJP had posted a photo of the poster that showed the prime minister along with Lord Ram with the message that they built the Ram Mandir. Taking offence to the post, the Congress said the BJP has portrayed Modi's caricature bigger than Lord Ram. "This is an insult to crores of devotees. The poster shows that Modi is the Margdarshak of Lord Ram. Looks like for the BJP, Modi is bigger than Ram. We are sure that the BJP will be destroyed by Ram, who slayed Ravana," it stated. **ENS**

# Farmers unite, call for Delhi Chalo in Feb-end

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Bengaluru

THE Samyukta Kisan Morcha has called a nationwide 'Delhi Chalo' protest by the end of February to raise their voice against the "anti-farmer" laws of the Union government and other issues. More than five lakh farmers from across the nation are expected gather at the national capital.

The protest call was announced during a press conference addressed by farmer leaders from eight states in Bengaluru on Sunday. "We have been conducting Mahapanchayats across various regions over the last 15 days and have more such discussions planned in the upcoming days," said Jagjeet Singh Dallewal, a farmer leader from Punjab.

The farmer leaders had put forth seven demands encompassing issues like guaranteed Minimum Support Price (MSP) based on the C2+50% formula, which includes the input cost of capital and the rent on the land to provide the farmers 50% returns along with debt relief for all farmers, withdrawal of state government land acquisition laws, and an increase in import duties on agricultural products.

"We understand different languages, but we together comprehend the government's partiality toward privatisation," said Sachin Mohapatra, a farmer leader from Odisha. "To ensure that our voice resonates loud enough for Prime Minister Narendra Modi to hear, we are set to stage a protest as part of the Delhi Chalo programme, which will focus on seven major demands," the farmer leader added.

During the meeting, the leaders also stressed on protecting democratic and secular values and expressed discontent with the suspension of opposition Members of Parliament and the government's behaviour towards Olympian wrestlers, particularly in the recent case of BJP MP Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh. The leaders termed these acts as detrimental signs to the democratic values of the country.

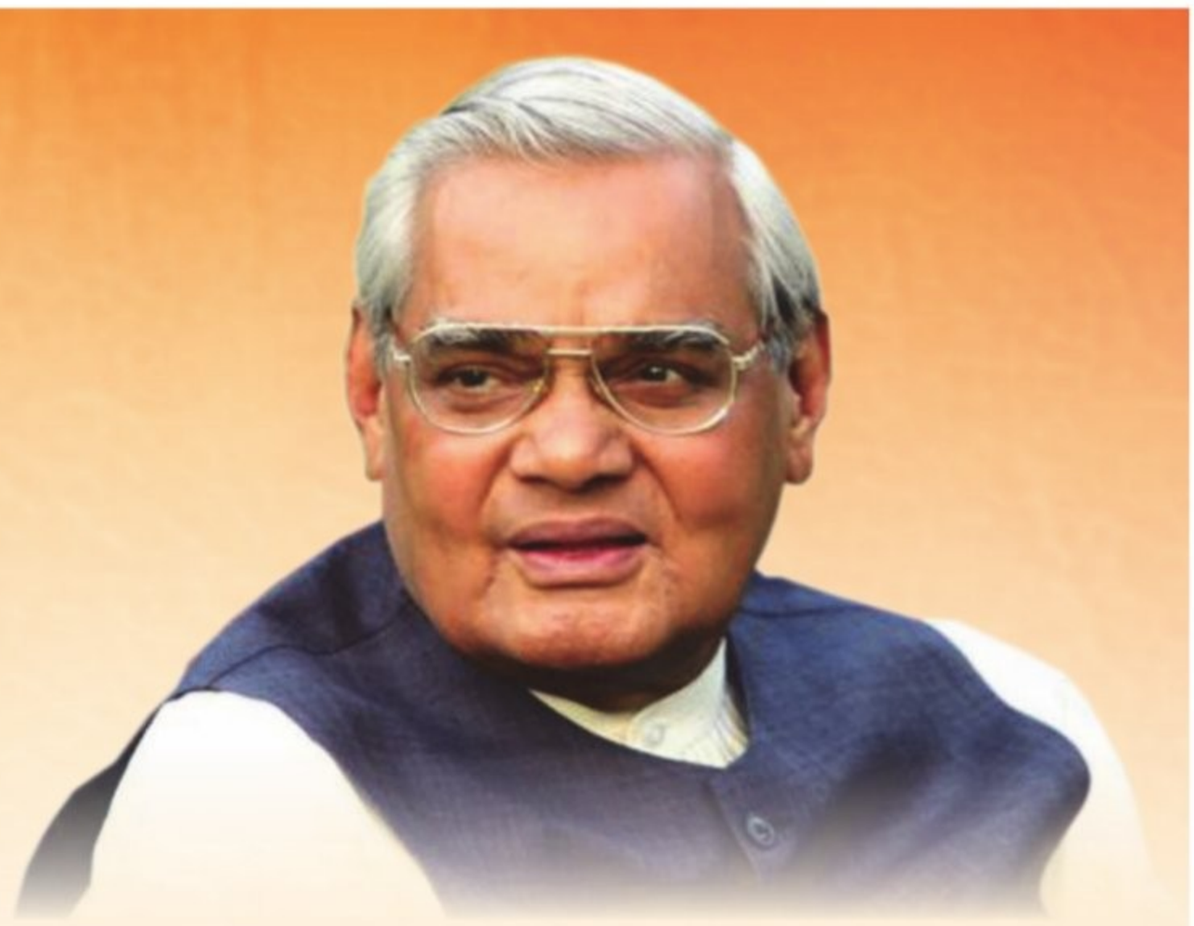
छत्तीसगढ़ शासन

छत्तीसगढ़ महतारी

हमने बनाया है, हम ही संवारेंगे

# Saluting

The Architect of Chhattisgarh
Former Prime Minister,
Bharat Ratna
**Late Shri Atal Bihari Vajpayee**
on his
**Birth Anniversary**



# Good Governance Day

## Dhaan Bonus Rashi Vitaran Samaroh

**Shri Narendra Modi**
Hon'ble Prime Minister
India

25 December 2023
Time-1.00 PM
Village-Bendri, Abhanpur
Raipur (C.G.)

**Shri Vishnu Deo Sai**
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Chhattisgarh

Chief Guest
**Shri Vishnu Deo Sai**
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Chhattisgarh

Special Guests
**Shri Vijay Sharma**
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Chhattisgarh

39189/11

Modi ki Guarantee

**Farmers will Receive Bonus of ₹3716 Crore**

- Pradhan Mantri Awas approved for over 18 lakh eligible beneficiaries.
- Procurement of 21 quintals of paddy per acre.
- Paddy Procurement at the rate of Rs 3100 per quintal.

**सबका साथ, सबका विकास - सबका विश्वास और सबका प्रयास**

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छत्तीसगढ़ जनसंपर्क

## AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE MARKET COMMITTEE, KADUR.

No. AMD/APMC(K)/ 1300 / 2023-24 Dated : 21-12-2023

**Brief Tender Notice (Only through E-Procurment System)**

Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Kadur invites itemwise tender in two covers system to be submitted through E-Procurment portal as per Karnataka Transparency in public procurement Act 1999, 2000 rules and as per related order, circular issued in public works department and E-Procurment portal and eligible as per Standard Tender Documents KW-4, Clause – 3 (with latest amendments) work construction of CC road and RCC drain in main market yard of apmc kadur approved under NABARD RIDF – 29 (2023-24). Tender amount of work is Rs. 168,09,533=72. EMD amount is Rs. 2,52,200=00 and date of pre-bid meeting 02-01-2024 at 11.00 a.m. Last date for receipt of filled technical and financial documents : 08-01-2024 at 5.00 p.m. Dated of opening technical bid : 10-01-2024 at 5.30 p.m. Dated of opening financial bid : 24-01-2024 at 11.00 a.m. Further details can be obtained through website https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in/#/portal/portal-home or during office hours. (Office Telephone No. 08267-200284)

**Sd/- Secretary APMC, KADUR.** **Sd/-Administrator APMC, KADUR.**

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FORM NO. 14: [See Regulation 33(2)]
By Regd. A/D, Dasti failing which by Publication.

## OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 2)

BSNL Building , 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore

**DEMAND NOTICE**

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961.

**RC/80/2022**
CANARA BANK
-- Versus --
Mrs PRITHI BHUYAN & OTHERS

To
**(CD 1) CANARA BANK,** No.186, Kannamangala, Devanahalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District ...CERTIFICATE HOLDERS
**(CD 1) Mrs PRITHI BHUYAN,** W/o Mr. D.J. Bhuyan, No.27, M.M. Road, No.202, Rock Emerald Apartment, Cox Town Bangalore-560005
**Also At:** MrS. PRITHI BHUYAN, No.14, Pragjotish Nagar, Gauhati Post, Gauhati University, Jalukbari-781014
**(CD 2) Mr.D.J.BHUYAN,** S/o Mr.R.C. Bhuyan, No.27, Mm Road, No.202, Rock Emerald Apartment, Cox Town Bangalore-560005
**Also At:** Mr.D.J. BHUYAN, S/o Mr.Tr.C. Bhuyan, Prop of M/s Alpine Solutions Services, No.40, First Floor, Gover Road, Cox Town, Bangalore-560005
**(CD 3) Mr. TANVEER KHAN,** S/o Mr.Shabbir Khan, No.05, 2nd Floor, Kenchappa Road, Opp Musa Apartment, Frazer Town Bangalore-560005
**Also At:** Mr. TANVEER KHAN, S/o Mr. Shabbir Khan, Prop of M/s Zohra Fashion Dress Materials, No.18/17, New City Centre, Narayana Pillay Street, Commercial Street, Bangalore
**(CD 4) M/s SAMRUDDHI REALTY LTD,** Rep by its Authorised Signatory Mr. Dharmesh M Kuvalekar Having Office at The Landmark, No.21/14, 4th Floor, M.G. Road, Bangalore-560001
**Also At:** M/s Samruddhi Realty Ltd, No.01, 2nd Floor, Tata Lane, Richmond Road Cross, Bangalore-560025 . ...CERTIFICATE DEBTORS

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 2) in **OA/1575/2018** an amount of **Rs. 95,14,395 ( Rupees Ninety Five Lakhs Fourteen Thousands Three Hundred Ninety Five Only)** along with pendentellite and future interest @ 12% compound Interest Yearly w.e.f. **11/10/2018** and cost till realization has become due against you (Jointly and severally/ Fully/Limited). 2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under. 3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing. 4. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:
(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate/execution proceedings.
(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **date: 10/05/2022.**

Sd/- Recovery Officer -1
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 2)

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## BANARAS LOCOMOTIVE WORKS, VARANASI-221004

Bid No.: E-90/2023-24 Date: 22.12.2023

**E-TENDERS**

E-Tenders are invited for & on behalf of the President of India for the supply of following items. Only e-offer will be accepted for which vender must have Class III Digital Signature and registrations on IREPS. The details of tenders are in the following sequence S.No. - Tender No. (Due Date), Description and Quantity. **S.No.: 1.** 09221461B (08.01.2024), Cable Lug 0.5-10/M4CUVZn, to PL No. 29616402, 2421 Nos. **2.** 09231319A (12.01.2024), Developmental Tender for Extended ARC Chute ASM Kit, to PL No. 18140154, 06 Nos. **3.** 09231325A (12.01.2024), Developmental Tender for Current Sensor-1000A, to PL No. 18160025, 05 Nos. **4.** 09231077A (12.01.2024), Developmental Tender for Primary Voltage Transformer, to PL No. 29695028, 54 Nos. **5.** 09231089B (15.01.2024), Developmental Tender for Cable Tie 360 X 4.8 PA, to PL No. 29618710, 30000 Nos. **6.** 03231031 (04.01.2024), Set of Other Hoses, Part No. 29611519, Qty. 521 Set **7.** 03231423A (29.12.2023), Set of Fitting, Part No. 29610916, Qty. 499 Set **8.** 03231099D (15.01.2024), Developmental Tender of Sealing Rubber, Part No. 29250559, Qty. 30 Set **9.** 03231111C (15.01.2024), Developmental Tender of Set of Fitting, Part No. 29610916 , Qty. 30 Set **10.** 03231353C (12.01.2024), Developmental Tender of Set of Insulating Base, Part No. 29720977, Qty. 20 Set **11.** 01231238 (01.01.2024), Assembly Main Connecting Rod, PL No. 10030050, Qty. 8 Nos. **12.** 01231203 (12.01.2024), Counter Weight RB Rear, PL No. 16121340, Qty. 4 Nos., Counter Weight LB Rear, PL No. 16121363, Qty. 4 Nos. **13.** 04231203E Developmental Tender (15.01.2024), Fibre Glass Insulation Kit PL No. 29721167, Qty. 30 Sets **14.** 04231103A (16.01.2024), Panel Radiator to PL No. 11420236, Qty. 06 Nos. **15.** 04231034D (15.01.2024), Modified Striker Casting (Dev. Tender) PL No. 29130062, Qty. 20 Nos. **16.** 10221587B (11.01.2024), Kit of Turbo Dowelling Components, Part No. 16081110, Qty. 120 Nos. **17.** 06231247 (19.01.2024), Main Transformer 6531 Kva for WAG-9 loco specn no. CLW/ES/3/0456 Rev J or latest & STR No. CLW/C-D&D/STR/001 Rev. 0 or latest tank spec no. CLW/ES/3/0507 ALT NIL or latest conservator tank Spec. No. CLW/ES/3/0508 ALT NIL or latest & STR No. RDSO/2013/EL/STR/0079 Rev. 0 latest to PL No. 29731008 Qty. 310 Nos. The details of above tenders are available on **www.blw.indianrailways.gov.in** and **www.ireps.gov.in. CORRIGENDUM : Sl. No.: 18. Bid No.:** E-76, **Tender No.:** 09231317A, Transducer Tr MRPT to PL No. 18120349, Revision-1, **Existing due date :** 20.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 05.01.2024, **19. Bid No.:** E-77, **Tender No.:** 09231313A, Contractor AC 3 Pole 250A to PL No. 18140117, Revision-1, **Existing due date :** 18.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 08.01.2024, **20. Bid No.:** E-81, **Tender No.:** 09231208A, Contractor AC3 Pole 150A to PL No. 18140051, Revision-2, **Existing due date :** 22.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 08.01.2024, **21. Bid No.:** E-76, **Tender No.:** 09231315A, Ground Relay (GP) to PL No. 18180048, Revision-1, **Existing due date :** 15.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 10.01.2024, **22. Bid No.:** E-76, **Developmental Tender No.:** 10221196B, Piston Ring Set, Part No. 16030618, Revision-1, **Existing due date :** 15.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 29.12.2023, **23. Bid No.:** E-71, **Developmental Tender No.:** 10231045A, Lock Spring Seat, Part No. 16241629, Revision-2, **Existing due date :** 15.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 29.12.2023, **24. Bid No.:** E-84, **Tender No.:** 04231860, Revision-1, **Existing due date :** 21.12.2023, **Revised due date:** 26.12.2023, **Existing Qty.:** 43 Nos., **Revised Qty.:** 57 Nos. **NOTE:** All other terms and conditions will remain unchanged for above tenders.

PRO/BLW/S-97 PRINCIPAL CHIEF MATERIAL MANAGER

/blwvaranasi "Website : http://blw.indianrailways.gov.in"

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Govt of Karnataka

## Agricultural Produce Market Committee. Tarikere

B.H. Road N.H 206 Tarikere-577228 Tarikere-TalukChickmagaluru-District
Pin Code: 577228 E-mail ID: apmctarikere@rediffmail.com
Office Ph.No. 08261-222221

No. AMD/APMC/T/736/2023-24 Date: 21.12.2023

**Brief Tender Notification**
(Only through e-procurement system)

Agricultural Produce Market Committee, Tarikere Invites Item wise Tender in two covers system to be submitted through e-procurement portal as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act 1999, 2000 Rules and as per related order, circular issued in Public Works Department and e-procurement portal and eligible as per Standard Tender Documents KW-4 Clause 3 (with latest amendments) work Construction of CC Road Drain & Compound wall in Shivani Sub-Market Yard of APMC Tarikere Approved under Nabard RIDF-29(2023-24)Work Indent No.APMC/2023-24/ OW/WORK_INDENT170 Tender amount of works is Rs.2,52,13,936=63 E.M.D Amount is Rs.3,78,300=00 and date of Pre-bid meeting: 02.01.2024 at 11.00 AM. Last date for receipt of filled technical and financial documents: 08.01.2024 at 5.00 PM , Date of opening technical Bid: 10.01.2024 at 5.00 PM Dated of opening financial Bid: 24.01.2024 at 11.00 AM. Further details can be obtained through website https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.inor during office hours.

**Sd/- Secretary APMC, Tarikere** **Sd/- Administrator APMC, Tarikere**

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## UJVN LIMITED

H.O.: "UJJWAL", Maharani Bagh, GMS Road, Dehradun-248006, Telephones.: 0135-2763808, Fax- 0135- 2763508, CIN No. U40101UR2001SGC025866, Website: www.ujvnl.com

प.सं. 1266 **Date Extension Notice-01** दि0: 23.12.2023

It is to inform that due to unavoidable reasons invited bid of NIT No: 09/EE(E&M-SHP)/Madhyamaheshwar/2023-24 from the Office of Executive Engineer (E&M-SHP), Guptkashi is hereby extended as follows:
**1. Last date for submission of bids online**: 02.01.2024 upto 11:00 am
**2. Last date for submission of bids in hard copy**: 03.01.2024 upto 11:00 am
**3. Date of opening of bids:** 05.01.2024 at 12:30 pm
All other terms & conditions of the bid documents shall remain unchanged.

"Avoid wasteful use of Electricity" **Executive Engineer (E&M-SHP)**

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## KARNATAKA GOVERNMENT STOCK (SECURITIES)

Finance Department
Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru.

1. Aggregate Amount: **Total Rs.3000 Crore, (Rs.3000 Crore (14 Year Tenure)).**
2. Method of Issue : By auction, through PDO, RBI, Mumbai (Fort).
3. Date of auction : **December 26, 2023.**

Government of Karnataka invites subscription to the above securities. Copies of the Notification and Application forms may be obtained from PDO, RBI, Bangalore. Non - competitive bidding facility has been introduced by RBI to encourage participation of retail investors. The Government stock up to 10% of the notified amount of the sale will be allotted to eligible individuals and institutions. Sample Tender Forms and the revised scheme of Non - competitive bidding facility is available on the website **www.rbi.org.in**

**Sd/- (Dr. P. C. Jaffer)**
**Secretary to Government**
**(Budget & Resources), Finance Department**

DIPR/CP/RO/2672/2023-24

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

The State Level Environment Impact Assessment Authority - Karnataka (Constituted by Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) Government of India), has accorded the Environmental Clearance Residential Buildings Project on the property bearing several survey numbers 33/4,36/4,37/5,37/6 of Shivanhalli and 10/3&10/4 Jakkuru Village Yelahanka Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru Urban District being developed by M/s. Mana Projects Pvt Ltd, vide order No. SEIAA 68 CON 2023 Dated 22.06.2023. The said copy of environment clearance is available with the SEIAA office and the website of MOEF&CC at https://parivesh.nic.in

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FORM NO. 14: [See Regulation 33(2)]
By Regd. A/D, Dasti failing which by Publication.

## OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - I/II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 2)

BSNL Building , 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore

**DEMAND NOTICE**

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961.

**RC/25/2022**
CANARA BANK
-- Versus --
Mr SOMASHEKARA G H AND OTHERS

To
**(CD 1) CANARA BANK,** No 186 Kannamangala, Devanhalli Taluk, Bangalore Rural District -562110 ...CERTIFICATE HOLDERS
**(CD 1) Mr SOMASHEKARA G H,** S/o Mr Gurupanahalli Hallappa, G 103, 4th Main, Old Township Qutres Near Aiyappa Temple, HAL Bangalore
**Also at:** No 996 8th Floor, Central Township Quarters HAL, Marathalli Post, Bangalore-560037
**(CD 2) Mr. MUNIRAJU D,** S/o Mr. Laxman Doddaia, No. 153-C, Lane Anjanappa Garden, Chamarajpet, Bangalore-560018
**(CD 3) M/s SAMRUDHDHI REALTY LTD,** The Land Mark No 21 14 4th Floor, MG Road, Bangalore- 560001
**Also at:** No.01, 2nd Floor, Tala Lane, Richmond Road Cross, Rep By Mr.Dharamesh M.Kuvalekar ...CERTIFICATE DEBTORS

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of order passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALOR (DRT 2) in **OA/184/2019** an amount of **Rs. 65,22,500.90 (Rupees Sixty Five Lakh Twenty Two Thousands Five Hundred And Paise Ninety Only)** along wit pendentellite and future interest @ 8.90% Compound Interest Year w.e.f. **27/12/2018** and cost till realization has become due against you (Jointly a severally). 2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under. 3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing. 4. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:
(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate/execution proceedings.
(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **date: 21/03/2022**

Sd/- Recovery Officer
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 2)

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## EQUITAS SMALL FINANCE BANK LTD

Corporate Office: No.769, Spencer Plaza, 4th Floor, Phase-II, Anna Salai, Chennai, TN - 600 002

**POSSESSION NOTICE**
(Rule 8(1) of the Security Interest Enforcement Rules, 2002)
(For Immovable Property)

Whereas, the undersigned being the Authorized Officer of the EQUITAS SMALL FINANCE BANK LIMITED a Company incorporated under the Companies Act, 1956 and within the meaning of section-2 (20) of the Companies Act, 2013 and Banking Company, within the meaning of section 5(C) of under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 having its registered office 4th Floor, Phase-II, Spencer Plaza, 769, Anna Salai, Chennai – 600 002, and having branch offices in the various places throughout India. Under the Securitization and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Security Interest Act, 2002 and in exercise of powers conferred under section 13(12) read with rule 3 of the Security Interest (Enforcement) Rules, 2002, issued a demand notice dated **08/09/2023** calling upon Borrower / Co-Borrower/Guarantors/Mortgagors **1. Mrs. Nirmala Bai Shanthi Lal, 2. Mrs.Lalita and 3. Mr.M.Prathk Jain** to repay the amount mentioned in the notice being **Rs.10,58,288/- (Rupees Ten Lakhs Fifty Eight Thousand Two Hundred and Eighty Eight Only) as on 03/09/2023** with subsequent interest, penal interest, charges, costs etc. as per the agreement(s) within 60 days from the date of the said notice.

The Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantors/ Mortgagors, having failed to repay the amount, notice is hereby given to the Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantors/ Mortgagors in particular and the public in general that the undersigned has taken possession of the property described herein below in exercise of powers conferred on him/her under section 13(4) of the said Act read with rule 8 of the said Rules.

The Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantors/ Mortgagors attention is invited to provisions of sub- section (8) of Section 13 of the Act, in respect of time available, to redeem the secured assets.

The Borrower/ Co-Borrower/ Guarantors/ Mortgagors in particular and the public in general is hereby cautioned not to deal with the property and any dealings with the property will be subject to the charge of Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited for the amount due from the borrower(s) and interest thereon.

**SCHEDULE OF SECURED ASSET/S**

**Residential Property Owned By Mrs.Nirmala Bai Shanthilal and Mrs.M.Lalita.** All that piece and parcels of Immovable Property bearing Municipal No.40 (Old No.23/A), measuring East to West 30 Feet (9.144 Meters) and North to South 40 Feet (12.192 Meters), in all measuring 1200 sq.ft., or 111.483 sq. meters, situated at 2nd Cross, Wheeler Road, Cleveland Town, Bangalore. **Four Corners Of The Said Property:** North: 25 Feet Road, South : Property of A.R.Hari, East: Property bearing No.41, West: 25 feet Road. Together with all buildings and structure attached to the earth or permanently fastened to anything attached to earth, both present and future and all easementary / mamool rights annexed thereto.

**Date: 21.12.2023** **Authorised Officer**
**Place: Bangalore** **Equitas Small Finance Bank Ltd**

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Government of Tamil Nadu

## Commissionerate of Stationery and Printing, Chennai-2

Cte.No.I-Election/35015/2023 **TENDER NOTICE** Dated:22.12.2023

For and on behalf of the Governor of Tamil Nadu, E-tenders are invited along with required samples for fixing rate contract for the purchase of Stationery articles, Corrugated plastic sheet Voting Compartments, Polythene Sheets and Polling Materials to Lok Sabha General Election 2024 from Manufacturers/Distributors and Authorized dealers and Sale of used P.S.Plates and Iron Scraps in Chennai and other Branch Presses as per the following groups.

| Sl. No. | Groups & items | | Tender Form can be accessed | Tender opening date and time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | GROUP – I SL.NO 1 to 20 - 20 ITEMS | Purchase | From 25.12.2023 -11am To 29.01.2024-11am | 30.01.2024 11.00 a.m. |
| 2 | GROUP – II SL.NO 1 to 7 - 7 ITEMS | | | |
| 3 | GROUP – III - SL.NO.1 to 4 – 4 Items. | | | |
| 4 | GROUP – IV to IX (Sale of Used P.S. Plates) | Sales | | |
| 5 | GROUP – X – (Sale of Iron Scraps). | | | |

Tender documents can be accessed from **https://tntenders.gov.in**

Chennai-2
Dated:22.12.2023 DIPR/6796/Tender/2023 **Commissioner.**

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## SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

**E-Tender Notice No. 42/2023 Dated:19-12-2023**

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tender for the following works:

| Sl. | Description in Brief |
|---|---|
| Sl. 1 | Set of KBIL make WSP items **(Qty. 74 No's.) (Tender No. L8236918)** |
| Sl. 2 | Non contact laser based wheel profile measurement and wheel diameter measurement system. **(Qty. 02 No's) (Tender No. L8236924)** |

Last date for submission of bids for:
**Upto 10:30 Hrs. on 12-01-2024**
**For details log on:www.ireps.gov.in**

**Senior Divisional Materials Manager Bengaluru**
PUB/579/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

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BEFORE THE HON'BLE XV ADDITIONAL CITY CIVIL & SESSIONS JUDGE, AT: BANGALORE(CCH-03)

**P and SC. No.697/2023**

**BETWEEN:1.Smt. Yashovathi S J** W/o Late Harsha Kumar S. Aged about: 69 years, R/at: #341/2, 2nd Cross, 5th Main, Bannerghatta Road, Nobel Residency, Bangalore South, Bangalore-560076. **...PETITIONER NO.1**
**2. Shri. Hanoch Harsha Kumar** S/o Late S. Harsha Kumar, Aged about: 47 years, R/at: E-001, Golden Star Apartments, ITPL Main Road, Hoodi Circle, Bangalore North, Mahadevpura, Bangalore, 560048. **...PETITIONER NO.2**
**3. Ms. Joice Christina,** D/o Late Harsha Kumar S, Aged about: 44 years, R/at: The Brambles, Durham Road, Sacriston Durham, DH7 6LN, United Kingdom **Represented by her Special Power of Attorney Shri. Hanoch Harsha Kumar. ...PETITIONER NO.3**
**4. Ms. Jane Diana Florence,** D/o Late Harsha Kumar S. Aged about: 39 years, R/at: #341/2, 2nd Cross, 5th Main, Bannerghatta Road, Nobel Residency, Bangalore South, Bangalore 560076. **...PETITIONER NO.4**
**(Hereinafter the Petitioners No.1 to 4 are referred to as Petitioners collectively)**
**AND:NIL ...RESPONDENT**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

Whereas, the above-named petitioners have filed a petition u/s 372 of Indian Succession Act, 1925 for the grant of succession certificate in favour of the Petitioners, in respect of the Schedule A mentioned below. The below mentioned Schedule A has held by one Late S. Harsha Kumar S/o G. Somasundra, who is husband of Petitioner No. 1 and father of Petitioners No.2 to 4, who expired on 07.06.2023. Interested parties are hereby called upon to appear before this Hon'ble Court in person or by pleader duly instructed on **05.02.2024 at 11:00 AM,** inform to show cause against the Petitioners failing wherein the appearance will be heard and declared as Ex-parte.

**SCHEDULE A**

Locker No.04, State Bank of India, Church Street Branch- 07987, Bangalore 560001.
Given under my hand and seal on this 19th day of December/2023 at Bengaluru

**BY ORDER OF THE COURT**
Sd/- Assistant Registrar
City Civil Court, Bangalore

**ADVOCATE FOR PETITIONERS**
**Ayantika Mondal Advocate,**
Prime Legal, No. 39/2, 2nd floor, ASVNV Sangha building, KG Road, Bangalore -560009
Mob-No: 974001 3535.

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## SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

The undersigned, on behalf of the President of India, Invites E-Tenders for the following works:

**E-Tender Notice No. B/TRD.2023-24/12 Dated: 18-12-2023**

| Name of work | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| [i] Rewiring of Phooltas make 4-wheeler (Mark-IV) tower wagon No. PTL2011070061, PTL2011070060 and PTL2013020134 [ii] Overhauling of lifting Platform of TW865 BEML 8 WHEELER [iii] Replacement of battery of Tower Wagon PTL2013020134. | Rs. 39,67,174.43 |

**E-Tender Notice No. B/TRD.2023-24/14 Dated: 18-12-2023**

| Name of work | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| [i] Conversion of OHE from tramway to conventional in WHPC-SGWF-WFD Rd 5, replacement of Isolators and Shifting of mast in WFD depot Jurisdiction [ii] Provision of sacrificial mast and bifurcation of Roads at SGT yard [iii] Electrification of Rd-10 and top wiring arrangements for Rd-11 and Rd-12 at SGT yard. | Rs. 2,61,49,027.74 |

**E-Tender Notice No. B/TRD.2023-24/15 Dated: 18-12-2023**

| Name of work | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| [i] Modification of OHE due to shifting of IOL's infront of stop signals in Bengaluru - Jolarpettai section [ii] Conversion of OHE from tramway to conventional at Bangarapet Rd 6, provision of isolator, SI, structure bonds, buried Rails in SP-SSP's, Droppers, Earth pits and Retreving of masts etc., in the jurisdiction of Bangarapet & Kuppam [iii] Upgradation/ Improvement of TRD assets in Bengaluru Division on age cum condition basis. | Rs. 2,30,22,178.79 |

**E-Tender Notice No. B/TRD.2023-24/16 Dated: 16-12-2023**

| Name of work | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| Improvement to power factor at TPP/TSS. | Rs. 78,50,316.01 |

Last date for submission of bids for above Tenders: **Upto 15:00 Hrs. on 09-01-2024**
**For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in**

**Senior Divisional Electrical Engineer Traction Distribution, Bengaluru**
PUB/576/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

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## UNIVERSITY OF KERALA THIRUVANANTHAPURAM-34

No. 18651/Advt-141/2023/PR

**EXPRESSION OF INTEREST**

Invites Expression of Interest in sealed two-cover format (Technical & Financial) from registered and experienced architectural firms/ Project Management Consultants for KIIFB funded project, for the Thanu Padmanabhan Centre of Excellence in Astronomy and Astrophysics in between the Vice Chancellor's quarters and Campus Nursery school at Kariavattom campus. The building is to serve as the mainstay of the Centre with an Architecture laid in ergonomic design for the stakeholders involved in Research, Teaching, and Administration of the Centre. **Offers in sealed cover containing registration certificate and experience certificate should reach the undersigned not later than 10.30 am on or before 8th January 2024. Offers will be opened at 11.30 am on the same day.**

For more details visit 'Tenders' in www.keralauniversity.ac.in

Thiruvananthapuram 20.12.2023 Sd/- Registrar

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## BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, BENGALURU

4th Floor, Telephone House Building, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560 001.

**O.A.NO.1501/2022**

BETWEEN:
**Bank of India,** Milk Colony Branch, No.824, 1st Main Road, A Block, Milk Colony, Subramanyanagar 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560 055. **... Applicant**
**AND:**
**M/s Benaka Engineering & another. ...Defendants**

**SUMMONS ISSUED TO DEFENDANT NO.1 & 2 UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES OF 1993 BY PAPER PUBLICATION**

To,
**1. M/s Benaka Engineering,** Represented by tis Proprietor: Mr.Pradeep Gopal Bhat No.1121, 2 Cross, 7 Main, Doddanna Industrial Estate, Viswaneedam Post, Bengaluru-560 091.
**2. Mr.Pradeep Gopal Bhat,** S/o not known No.1121, 2nd Cross, 7th Main, Doddanna Industrial Estate, Viswaneedam Post, Bengaluru-560 091.

WHEREAS the Applicant has instituted an application under section 19 of Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against the above defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.53,94,035.26 (Rupees Fifty Three Lakhs Ninety Four Thousand Thirty Five and Paise Twenty Six Only)** amount together with current and future interest, cost and other reliefs.
The above mentioned defendants are required to appear before the Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly instructed in support of their defense to show cause **on 20/02/2024 at 10.30 A.M.** as to why the relief's prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal on this **9 day November 2023.**

**By order of the Tribunal**
**Sd/- Registrar**
**Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Bengaluru**

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## BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, BENGALURU

4th Floor, Telephone House Building, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560 001.

**O.A.NO.1506/2022**

BETWEEN:
**Bank of India,** Milk Colony Branch, No.824, 1st Main Road, A Block, Milk Colony, Subramanyanagar 2nd Stage, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560 055. **... Applicant**
**AND:**
**M/s Global Imports & Exports & another ...Defendants**

**SUMMONS ISSUED TO DEFENDANT NO.1 & 2 UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES OF 1993 BY PAPER PUBLICATION**

To,
**1. M/s Global Imports & Exports,** Represented by its Proprietor Mrs. G.Kavitha, No.16/B, II Floor, 35th Main, 4th C Cross, Jai Maruthinagar, Nandini Layout, Bangalore - 560 096.
**2. Mrs. G.Kavitha,** Proprietor of M/s Global Exports and Imports No.16/B, II Floor, 35th Main, 4th C Cross, Jai Maruthinagar, Nandini Layout, Bangalore - 560 096.

WHEREAS the Applicant has instituted an application under section 19 of Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against the above defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.68,46,083.92 (Rupees Sixty Eight Lakhs Forty Six Thousand Eighty Three and Paise Ninety Two Only)** amount together with current and future interest, cost and other reliefs.
The above mentioned defendants are required to appear before the Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly instructed in support of their defense to show cause **on 07/02/2024 at 10.30 A.M.** as to why the relief's prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal on this **9 day November 2023.**

**By order of the Tribunal**
**Sd/- Registrar**
**Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Bengaluru**

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FORM NO. 14: [See Regulation 33(2)]
By Regd. A/D, Dasti failing which by Publication.

## DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-1, BENGALURU

BSNL Building , 4th Floor, Telephone House, Rajbhavan Road, Bangalore

**DEMAND NOTICE**

NOTICE UNDER SECTIONS 25 TO 28 OF THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS DUE TO BANKS AND FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, 1993 AND RULE 2 OF SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961.

**RC 93/2021** 08/03/2021
**CANARA BANK,** SANJAYANAGAR BRANCH, BENGALURU - 560 094. ....CERTIFICATE HOLDER
-- Versus --
SMT. S. MANGALA AND OTHERS

To
**1) Smt. S. Mangala,** W/o. N. Srikanta, No. 13/2, 2nd Cross, Park Road, Tulasi Thota, Bengalurur - 560 053.
**2) Sri. N. Srikanta,** S/o. Nanjundaiah, No. 13/2, 2nd Cross, Park Road, Tulasi Thota, Bengalurur - 560 053.
**3) Sri. Nandish,** S/o. N. Srikanta, No. 13/2, 2nd Cross, Park Road, Tulasi Thota, Bengalurur - 560 053. ...CERTIFICATE DEBTOR

This is to notify that as per the Recovery Certificate issued in pursuance of orders passed by the Presiding Officer, DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL, BENGALURU (DRT-1) in **OA/1169/2019** an amount of **Rs. 1,35,23,226.00 (Rupees One Crore Thirty Five Lakhs Twenty Three Thousands Two Hundred Twenty Six Only)** along with pendentellite and future interest and costs till realization. 2. You are hereby directed to pay the above sum within 15 days of the receipts of the notice, failing which the recovery shall be made in accordance with the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks and Financial Institutions Act, 1993 and Rules there under. 3. You are hereby ordered to declare on an affidavit the particulars of yours assets on or before the next date of hearing. 4. In addition to the sum aforesaid, you will also be liable to pay:
(a) Such interests as is payable for the period commencing immediately after this notice of the certificate/execution proceedings.
(b) All costs, charges and expenses incurred in respect of the service of this notice and warrants and other processes and all other proceedings taken for recovering the amount due.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **date: 08/03/2021.**

Sd/- Recovery Officer -1
DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 1)

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## SOUTH WESTERN RAILWAY

Publication of Corrigendum-7 (Item No.1) to E-Tender Notice No. CAO/CN/BNC/EPC/54/2023 Dated: 03-08-2023

| Item of work | Approx. Value |
|---|---|
| Construction of New Broad Gauge Line Track Between Yadwad (excl.) and Jamkhandi (excl.) for a length of 24.61 km Under Bagalkot-Kudachi New Line Project (142 Km) including Signal & Telecommunication & Electrical Works. (Tender Ref. No: YADWAD-JAMKHANDI-EPC) | Rs. 4,01,34,82,262/- |

| Date of Closing | |
|---|---|
| Existing | Revised |
| 02-01-2024 (11:00 Hrs.) | 01-02-2024 (11:00 Hrs.) |

**For details log on: www.ireps.gov.in**

Deputy Chief Engineer/Construction/Works
Bengaluru Cantonment
PUB/581/AAD/PRB/SWR/2023-24

South Western Railway - SWR | SWRRLY | SWRRLY

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## BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-I, BENGALURU

4th Floor, Telephone House Building, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560 001.

**O.A.NO.1151/2022**

BETWEEN:
**Bank of India, Rajajinagar Branch,** No.26, Mahadimane, 1st Block, 12th Main Road, Rajajinagar, Bengaluru-560 010 **... Applicant**
**AND:**
**M/s Darshini Creations & another ...Defendants**

**SUMMONS ISSUED TO DEFENDANT NO.1 & 2 UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES OF 1993 BY PAPER PUBLICATION**

To,
**1. M/s Darshini Creations,** Represented by its Proprietor Sri Basavaraju A.M No.54, A 16, 2nd Floor, Chaluma Complex, Nagarbhavi 2nd Stage, Near Central Bank, Bengaluru-560 091.
**2. Sri Basavaraju A M,** S/o Mailara Shetty, Prop: M/s Darshini Creations, No.54A 16, 2nd Floor, Chaluma Complex, Nagarbhavi 2nd Stage, Near Central Bank, Bengaluru -560 091

WHEREAS the Applicant has instituted an application under section 19 of Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against the above defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.30,95,366.57 (Rupees Thirty Lakhs Ninety Five Thousand Three Hundred Sixty Six and Paise Fifty Seven Only)** amount together with current and future interest, cost and other reliefs.
The above mentioned defendants are required to appear before the Tribunal in person or through an Advocate or duly instructed in support of their defense to show cause **on 19/03/2024 at 10.30 A.M.** as to why the relief's prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal on this **9 day November 2023.**

**By order of the Tribunal**
**Sd/- Registrar**
**Debts Recovery Tribunal-I, Bengaluru**

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QuoteExpress THE ONLY CONSTANT IN THE TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY IS CHANGE › MITCHELL KAPOR

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## IN THE COURT OF THE SUB JUDGE OF UTHANGARAI

**O.S.NO. 176 / 2020**

**Mr.Veeramani** ...PLAINTIFF
-Vs-
**1. Mr.Raji @ Rajendran,** S/o.Late.Krishnasamy Mudaliyar, No.18, Vinayagar Nagar First Street, Bangalore South.
**2. Mrs.Chandra,** W/o.Late.Murthi, Thalaviruchankottai, Mettur Village, Uthangarai Taluk, Krishnagiri Distirct.
**3. Mrs.Rajeshwari,** W/o.Prabhu, No.892, Chennai Kesavan Nagar First Street, Electronic City, Bangalore South, Bangalore and 9 other ... DEFENDANTS

**NOTICE TO THE 3RD, 4TH AND 6TH DEFENDANTS**

The Plaintiffs has filed the above suit against the Defendants for the declaration and null and void the suit poroperty and the same is posted for the appearance of 3rd, 4th and 6th Defendants on **12.01.2024.** The 3rd, 4th and 6th Defendants should appear on the above said date before the above said Honourable Court at **10.30 a.m.** either in person or your pleader failing which an Exparte order will be passed against you.

/By order of the court/

**P.Muthu, B.A., B.L.,**
**R.Vijay, B.A., B.L.,**
**Advaocates, Coimbatore.**
**Cell No.86820 06834**

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## BEFORE THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-II, BENGALURU

4th Floor, Telephone House Building, Raj Bhavan Road, Bengaluru - 560 001.

**O.A.NO.235/2023**

BETWEEN:
**Canara Bank,** Maski, Basavan Gouda Building, New Bazaar, Maski, Raichur District - 584 124 **.... Applicant**
**AND:**
**Mr. Uppal Shivakumar & another ...Defendants**

**SUMMONS ISSUED TO DEFENDANT No. 2 UNDER RULE 23 (VIII) OF THE DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL (PROCEDURE) RULES OF 1993 BY PAPER PUBLICATION**

To,
**2. Sri. Rambabu,** S/o Shamanna, R/a North Bengalore Hospital, 4th G Street, Chelkere Village, Dr Puneeth Rajkumar Road, Chellikere HRBR Layout, Kalyan Nagar, Bengaluru - 560 043.

WHEREAS the Applicant has instituted an application under section 19 of Recovery of Debts and Bankruptcy Act, 1993 against the above defendants for recovery of a sum of **Rs.60,18,426.00 (Rupees Sixty Lakhs Eighteen Thousand Four Hundred and Twenty Six Only)** amount together with current and future interest, cost and other reliefs.
Take notice that you are hereby required to show cause within 30 days of service of summons through Paper Publication **on 23/02/2024 at 10.30 A.M.** in person or by a Pleader/Advocate duly instructed as to why the relief's prayed for should not be granted. Take notice that in case default the application will be heard and determined in your absence.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal on this **04th day of November, 2023.**

**By order of the Tribunal**
**Sd/- Registrar**
**Debts Recovery Tribunal-II, Bengaluru**

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**FORM NO.17 [See rule 53 of the Second Schedule To the Income-Tax Act, 1961]**

## OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT I)

4th FLOOR, BSNL BUILDING, TELEPHONE HOUSE,RAJ BHAVAN ROAD BENGALURU-560001

**NOTICE FOR SETTLING A SALE PROCLAMATION**

UNDER RULE 53 OF THE SECOND SCHEDULE TO THE INCOME TAX ACT, 1961 READ WITH THE RECOVERY OF DEBTS & BANKRUPTCY ACT, 1993.

**RC 50/2021 IN OA 167/2020**
Canara Bank, Rajanukunte Branch
-- Versus --
Smt Vedavathi

To,
**Certified Debtor**
**Smt Vedavathi,** Proprietor of Sri Kanchivarada Agro Centre, W/o Sri Devaraj C, No. 35. Marasandra Village, Doddaballapaura Main Road, Doddatumkur Post-561203, Bengaluru North Taluk

Whereas you were ordered by the Presiding Officer of DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL BANGALORE (DRT 1) who had issued Recovery Certificate **No. 50/2021 in OA No. 167/2020** to pay to the Certificate Holder Bank the sum of **Rs 25,10,988/- (Rupees Twenty Five lakh Ten Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty Eight Only)** along with cost, expenses and future interest @ 11.65 % p.a. compound interest with monthly rests from **23/01/2020** i.e. date of filing of the QA/167/2020 till the date of realization in full, personally from the Certificate Debtor, hereinafter referred to as-

| CD Name | Int Type/ Mode | Int Rate | Effective Date | Order Date | Liability Type | Rc Amount (Rs) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CD-1 Smt Vedavathi | Compound Interest (Monthly) | 11.65 | 23/01/2020 | 27/11/2020 | Fully | 2510988 |

and whereas the said amount has not been paid by you, the undersigned has ordered the sale of undermentioned immovable properties.
You are hereby informed that the day on or after fifteenth day from the date of service of this notice has been fixed for drawing up the proclamation of sale and setting the terms thereof, you are requested to bring to the notice of the undersigned any encumbrances, charges, claims or liabilities attaching to the said properties or any portion thereof.

**SPECIFICATION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**
**SCHEDULE**
**(Description of Mortgaged Property)**

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Site No. 7, Khatha No. 927/927/7, PID No. 150200202500720357 measuring East to West- 60 and North to South- 30 feet in all measuring 1800 Sq Feet situated at Marasandra Village, coming under Arakere Gram Panchayath Limits, Hesaraghatta Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru District valued approximately Rs. 58.00.000/- standing in the name of the Defendant- Smt Vedavathi w/o Sri Devaraja C and **bounded on the : East by:** House Property in the name of Mudamma; **West by:** Road; **North by:** House Property in the name of Marappa; **South by:** House Property in the name of Manjunatha.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **date: 02/11/2023.**

**Sd/- RECOVERY OFFICER**
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL- 1, BENGALURU**

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**FORM NO.I.T.C.P.16: [See rule 48 of the Second Schedule to the Income Tax Act, 1961]**

## GOVERNMENT OF INDIA OFFICE OF THE RECOVERY OFFICER - II DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL-1, BENGALURU

4th FLOOR, BSNL BUILDING, TELEPHONE HOUSE,RAJ BHAVAN ROAD BENGALURU-560001

**WARRANT OF ATTACHMENT OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**

(See Sections 25 and 29 of the Recovery of Debts Due to Banks & Other Financial Institutions Act 1993 read with II Schedule to the Income Tax Act 1961).

**RC 50/2021 IN OA 167/2020**
Canara Bank, Rajanukunte Branch
-- Versus --
Smt Vedavathi

To,
**Certified Debtor**
**Smt Vedavathi,** Proprietor of Sri Kanchivarada Agro Centre, W/o Sri Devaraj C, No. 35. Marasandra Village, Doddaballapaura Main Road, Doddatumkur Post-561203, Bengaluru North Taluk
To,
**Smt Purnima Jaiswal,** The Branch Incharge, Canara Bank, Rajanukunte Branch, SY No. 16, Rajalakshmi Saw Mill Compound, Doddaballapura Main Road, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru District- 560064

Whereas the above named Certificate Debtors were ordered by the Recovery Certificate **No. 50/2021 in OA No. 167/2020** to pay to the Certificate Holder Bank the sum of **Rs. 25,10,988/- (Rupees Twenty Five lakh Ten Thousand Nine Hundred and Eighty Eight Only)** along with cost, expenses and future interest @ 11.65% p.a. compound interest with monthly rests from **23/01/2020** i.e. date of filing of the **OA/167/2020** till the date of realization in full, personally from the Certificate Debtor, hereinafter referred to as-

| CD Name | Int Type/ Mode | Int Rate | Effective Date | Order Date | Liability Type | Rc Amount (Rs) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CD-1 Smt Vedavathi | Compound Interest (Monthly) | 11.65 | 23/01/2020 | 27/11/2020 | Fully | 2510988 |

and whereas the certificate debtors failed to pay the said amount.
This is to command you to attach the immovable property of the said Certificate Debtor as set forth in the schedule hereunto annexed, or which shall be pointed out to you by the said Recovery Certificate and unless the said amount shall pay to you the above said sum and costs of this attachment, to hold the same until further orders from the Recovery Officer.
You are further commanded to return this warrant on or before **19-12-2023** with an endorsement certifying the day on which and the manner in which it has been executed, or why it has not been executed.

**SPECIFICATION OF IMMOVABLE PROPERTY**
**SCHEDULE**
**(Description of Mortgaged Property)**

All that piece and parcel of immovable property bearing Site No. 7, Khatha No. 927/927/7, PID No. 150200202500720357 measuring East to West- 60 and North to South- 30 feet in all measuring 1800 Sq Feet situated at Marasandra Village, coming under Arakere Gram Panchayath Limits, Hesaraghatta Hobli, Bengaluru North Taluk, Bengaluru District valued approximately Rs. 58.00.000/- standing in the name of the Defendant- Smt Vedavathi w/o Sri Devaraja C and **bounded on the : East by:** House Property in the name of Mudamma; **West by:** Road; **North by:** House Property in the name of Marappa; **South by:** House Property in the name of Manjunatha.
Given under my hand and the seal of the Tribunal, on this **date: 02/11/2023.**

**Sd/- RECOVERY OFFICER**
**DEBTS RECOVERY TRIBUNAL- 1, BENGALURU**

A 28-year-old woman was killed after being struck with a hammer by her husband at Chembaraki, near Vazhakkulam on Sunday. Police said that Rejeesh murdered his wife Anumol as she was planning for a divorce to live with her boyfriend but Rejeesh didn't want to end the marriage. The husband murdered her using a hammer and kitchen knife

# MANUAL SCAVENGING CONTINUES DESPITE BAN

## IT IS A SHAME THAT EVEN TODAY, HUMANS ARE CALLED TO CLEAN SEPTIC TANKS ACROSS THE STATE

BOSKY KHANNA @ Bengaluru

EACH time I am asked to entre a sewer pit to clean it, I feel like dying by suicide. But then I think of my family and children and tell myself that a little additional money with some risk is OK," said Rayanna (name changed), a manual scavenger.

Rayanna is one of the identified manual scavengers in the state. He sells vegetables to make a living. Despite promising his wife that he will not enter a pit to clean it, and despite being a vendor, apartment and commercial establishment dwellers contact him to clean septic tanks.

Appanna (40), a resident of Bengaluru, said, "I stopped this work long ago, and now I work as a security guard. But people still ask me if I can clean their pits. I feel ashamed when people ask me to clean their shit. It is very shameful that I am recognised by my caste and not respected for my present profession."

According to activists and people, manual scavengers are paid between Rs 500 and Rs 1000, while using a machine to clean costs Rs 2,000 an hour.

The tale of many others is similar. Officials at the Karnataka State Safai Karmachari Development Corporation and those who have worked as manual scavengers said that despite directions from courts and governments to have sufficient sucking and pumping machines in panchayat and municipality limits, manual scavenging continues in a hush-hush manner.

While the State government makes tall claims that manual scavenging is not happening, those who enter pits say they are called upon to do so at least once a month.

Recently, in Malur, Kolar, students were forced to clean a septic tank. The education department, district administration and State government cut a sorry figure and this shameful act also raised a red flag to the fact that such cases continue to happen.

"People's mentality has still not changed. No matter what the profession is, caste and economics takes the stage. Asking students to clean toilets in school is no different. All these are criminal offences," said Bezwada Wilson, Ramon Magsaysay awardee, and founder and national convener of Safai Karmachari Andolan.

He also demanded that the present penalty system under the Act – of Rs 1-5 lakh penalty and imprisonment of 1-5 years -- should be changed. He said that manual scavenging is reported as a civil case, but if booked under the SC/ST Act, it is a criminal case.

According to the Karnataka State Commission for Safai Karmacharis (KSCSK) statistics, 96 deaths have been reported since 1993. Officials, however, admitted that there could be many more, but do not come to light. This is also true of the number of complaints reported, besides 195 cases of hazardous cleaning. "As per our preliminary assessment, there is at least one case happening every month in the state, and most of them in Bengaluru, but they are all kept under wraps," said the official, not wanting to be named.

Chandrakala, secretary (additional director), KSCSK, said cases are going on. "When we inquire, people say they are not aware of the rules and court orders. What is even more shocking is that often, officials themselves express obliviousness. We have also found people reasoning that machines got late and there was no other option. The same reason was given in case of the Kolar incident," she said, and added that it was also cited in the HD Kote incident, where the hospital nurse, doctor and cleaner were taken to task after two people were made to clean a septic tank.

As per the Karnataka State Safai Karmachari Development Corporation (KSSKDC), there are 7,483 identified and registered manual scavengers in the state. Of these, 2,843 have been given one-time compensation till 2016. Another proposal for compensating 4,650 was taken up in 2022, and approval and amount is still awaited.

KSSKDC Commissioner Rakesh Kumar K said that as per the 2013 Act, manual scavenging is a criminal offence. The social welfare department is the nodal office implementing the Act. "After the Act was enforced, it is the duty of all panchayats and urban departments to ensure there are sufficient machines and safety equipment. In case there is a shortage, machines should be taken on rent. But still cases of manual scavenging are reported," he said.

Another senior official from KSSKDC ruled out the misconception that manual scavenging had seen a rise, after the construction of toilets under Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. "As per rules, there should be double pits and every pit is connected to a toilet. Toilets are constructed only after government approval and a record of their status is maintained," the official added.

### WHAT THE ACT SAYS

In 1993, the Employment of Manual Scavengers and Construction of Dry Latrines (Prohibition) Act was introduced. Later, the Central government introduced the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and their Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

Explaining the difference, KB Obalesh, state convener, Safai Karmachari Kavala Samithi, Karnataka, said rehabilitation was not a part of the 1993 Act. There was a clause that a person engaging in scavenging and the person assigning it should be arrested.

He said that after this, the number of complaints dropped to zero. There was no way to punish people. The Act also prohibited the construction of dry latrines. But the central and state governments continued to construct toilets. Further, if anyone died while cleaning, no action was taken unless the district magistrate took it up and had an FIR filed.

Looking at all this, activists began raising an alarm which peaked after 14 Bhangi families staged a protest in 2010 in Haveri, Savanur taluk, outside the municipality office and poured human excreta on their heads. It was found that there was no clause for punishing people in the 1993 Act. It was also found that urban local bodies were releasing advertisements stating if any incidents of manual scavenging were found, and those who came to register will be punished.

The ULBs were also asking people to come forward and register to avail of various government schemes. Activists found that it contained tricky clauses. The Central government also realised this and amended the Act, which came into effect in 2013. There are four new clauses added -- eradication, prohibition, rehabilitation and legal action -- for all those violating the Act. Community participation for stopping scavenging along with formation of central, state, district and sub-divisional level monitoring committees was also announced, he said.

### MYSURU

In October 2023, two pourakarmikas were forced to clean a manhole in HD Kote Government Hospital. The incident took place at the HD Kote Taluk Mother and Child Care Hospital. An FIR was lodged against contractor Santhosh Kumar, hospital administrative officer Dr Somanna, nurse Prameela and pourakarmika Parashuram for forcing pourakarmikas Muniya and Chandru to clean the tank. After the video of manual scavenging went viral, DC KV Rajendra ordered a probe.

Karnataka State Safai Karmachari Commission former chairman Kote Shivanna said a lack of awareness about the rules and orders of the courts are leading to incidents of manual scavenging. DCs should hold regular awareness meetings with officers, he added.

### UDUPI

No cases of manual scavenging have been reported in Udupi in the past five years, with the last incident reported on April 7, 2018. A labourer from the Dalit community had suffocated to death while cleaning a manhole in M-Kodi in Kasaba village, Kundapur taluk.

The deceased person Sandeep (25) from Thekkatte, was hired by Abdul Khader Geelani to work at his house. Sandeep had fallen into the pit and could not come out. Police booked a case against the accused.

Udupi DC Dr Vidya Kumari K who recently chaired the Safai Karmachari district vigilance committee meeting, said any individual engaged in such activities will face legal consequences under Section 8 of the Prohibition of Employment as Manual Scavengers and the Rehabilitation Act 2013.

### KALABURAGI

After the death of two persons due to suffocation two years ago, no case was reported, said officials of the Kalaburagi Mahanagara Palike. Two officials from Kalaburagi Water Supply and Drainage Board were arrested. Sources added that manual scavenging is still in practice in semi-urban and rural areas.

### Hassan

No cases have been reported in the past three years. Satish Kumar, president, Hassan City Municipality, said there is a clear direction for all scavengers not to indulge in manual scavenging. Health inspectors are also instructed not to direct any scavenger to get into the manhole or clean septic tanks manually.

Ramanna, a social worker, said a section of residents who were not satisfied with the work done by machines, allegedly forced scavengers to clear septic tank manually. The scavengers shouldn't clean the manhole due to any pressure he added. Venkatesh, a scavenger, said: "We are attending to complaints of manholes with sucking machine fixed to the vehicle. We also try to educate the residents about the SC direction."

*(With inputs from BK Lakshmikantha-Mysuru; Prakash Samaga- Udupi; Ramakrishna Badsheshi-Kalaburgi; BR Udaya Kumar- Hassan)*

BIG PICTURE

"The Act came into effect in 2013 and the SC order prohibiting manual scavenging came in 2014. No human should clean human excreta. But the government is not serious. It has done no campaigns. Today a person residing in the smallest of villages in Karnataka is aware of Swachh Bharat Abhiyan, but people still say they know nothing of the manual scavenging Act. What happened in Kolar is a crime. The government should stop the caste drama. The Constitution also says there should be no discrimination. Malur was only a representation of what is happening on the ground. In 2023 alone, there have been 93 deaths of manual scavengers across India.

Bezwada Wilson,
Ramon Magsaysay awardee

### What causes death

Sewer gases consist of varying levels of toxic and non-toxic gases, depending on the source, and results from decomposition of household and industrial waste, and fecal matter

Hydrogen sulfide, methane and ammonia are the main components

Exposure even to small levels of hydrogen sulphide causes irritation of the eyes and respiratory tract, headaches, nausea, drowsiness and dizziness

Higher concentration can lead to olfactory fatigue which means the person loses sense of smell, in spite of the highly characteristic rotten egg colour of hydrogen sulphide

High levels of hydrogen sulphide can be fatal

This is aggravated in combination with methane which decreases oxygen levels, especially in closed spaces

On inhalation, the gas is rapidly absorbed and causes irritation of mucous membranes and the respiratory tract leading almost immediately to pulmonary edema

There is often immediate loss of consciousness, coma, respiratory paralysis, seizures and death

**CASES AND THEIR STATUS**

| Year | Cases filed | FIRs | Ongoing cases | Punishment | Cases closed |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019-20 | 30 | 3 | 27 | 2 | 5 |
| 2020-21 | 14 | 2 | 12 | 3 | 5 |
| 2021-22 | 15 | 5 | 10 | 1 | 6 |
| 2022-23 | 28 | 1 | 27 | 1 | 2 |
| 2023-24* | 37 | 10 | 17 | 3 | 13 |

(*till date)

**CASES IN THE DISTRICTS**

| | |
|---|---|
| 2 | B'luru Rural |
| 40 | B'luru Urban |
| 9 | Gadag |
| 6 | Kolar |

(Source: KSCSK)

# Transman held for slashing, immolating woman in Chennai

GAUTHAM SELVARAJAN
@ Chennai

IN a gruesome case of crime, a 27-year-old woman was murdered by a transman by blindfolding her and tying her hands and legs before immolating her at a vacant plot at Ponmar near Thalambur late Saturday evening. The man also slashed her wrists and ankles, the police said, and added that the woman and the transman studied together in high school when he still went by the gender assigned at birth.

The Thalambur police identified the arrested transman as Vetrimaran (27), hailing from Madurai and residing at Mappedu in Tiruvallur district. The deceased woman was identified as R Nandhini who was also a native of Madurai. She was staying at her aunt's house in Kannagi Nagar and was working in a private IT company in Nungambakkam.

Nandini's elder sister said, "Nandhini, and Pandi Murugeswari (as Vetrimaran was known earlier), were very close during their school days. While they were in college, Pandi Murugeswari showed interest to transition into a man. A few years ago, she went to Bengaluru and started working there. With the money saved there, she came to Chennai for a gender reassignment procedure and became Vetrimaran. He would constantly update Nandhini about everything," said Nandhini's sister.

"Vetrimaran was possessive of Nandhini and did not want her to be close with any other man. He would often quarrel with her over this. She then stopped talking to Vetrimaran. As she was frequently seen together with a male colleague, Vetrimaran plotted to kill her," the police interrogation revealed.

On Saturday, a day before Nandhini's birthday, Vetrimaran contacted her and convinced her to meet him once in the pretext of a surprise plan for her birthday. He took her to many places including a temple. He then took her to a vacant plot where he blindfolded her, tied her arms and legs, slashed her wrists and ankles before immolating her, and escaped," the police officer said. However, Vetrimaran confessed to the crime during interrogation," the police added.

Nandhini's family said that she was not in a relationship with him. Her father said, "If she had told us that there was a problem here, we would have definitely helped her. Being empathic and supportive cost my daughter her life."

HOMAGE

A man dressed as MGR takes a selfie on the occasion of his 36th death anniversary at his memorial in Chennai on Sunday | P RAVIKUMAR

# Row over Dayanidhi's anti-Hindi remarks

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Chennai

A video clip purportedly showing former union minister and DMK functionary Dayanidhi Maran making derogatory remarks against labourers from states such as Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, which showed them in a poor light, was widely circulated on social media on Sunday.

After the video surfaced, leaders from the INDIA bloc condemned the remarks, fearing negative ramifications ahead of the Lok Sabha elections, particularly from the Hindi-speaking states.

In the video, Maran reportedly discussed the prominence of Tamil and English education, championed by his party. Maran also attributed Sundar Pichai's success at Google due to his Tamil upbringing.

In the video, Maran allegedly suggested that people who only know Hindi would be confined to menial jobs such as cleaning roads and toilets in Tamil Nadu.

Maran's video drew widespread criticism from leaders, including RJD leader and Bihar's deputy CM Tejashwi Yadav, who said the statement was unbecoming of a DMK leader.

Tamil Nadu BJP vice-president Narayanan Thirupathy and BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla aired their criticism against Maran's statements.

DMK leaders denied the allegations, stating that the video was taken out of context.

# Pinarayi has become a psychopath: Cong state prez

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@T' Puram

A day after police unleashed unusually forceful action against Congress leaders who took out a protest march to the DGP office in Thiruvananthapuram and slapped cases against them, party state president K Sudhakaran lashed out at Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan, terming him a "psychopath".

Terming Pinarayi the epitome of brutality, Sudhakaran warned him that 2024 would give him sleepless nights. "There is none to control Pinarayi in the party. He has become a psychopath. A situation has come where the Opposition can't even hold a black flag protest. We demand a judicial probe, under the aegis of a sitting judge, into the police atrocities against the Congress leaders and workers. The chief minister was forced to take up Nava Kerala Sadas after his party secretary M V Govindan's yatra turned out to be a damp squib," Sudhakaran told.

The Congress march to the DGP office had turned violent on Saturday, with police using water cannons and tear-gas shells to disperse the protesters. The police have registered cases against senior Congress leaders in connection with the violent incidents.

EXPRESS READ

### BRS govt created assets worth ₹50L cr: KTR

Hyderabad: BRS working president KT Rama Rao on Sunday claimed that the BRS, when it was in power, created assets wroth around ₹50 lakh crore. Rama Rao released 'Sweda Patram' (sweat paper) countering the state government's white papers on state's finances and power situation. He refuted the Congress government's statement that K Chandrasekhar Rao's government pushed the state into a debt trap. While making a presentation at Telangana Bhavan, Rama Rao said other than creating assets, the living standard also increased considerably in the state under BRS rule. He said that the per capita income increased and the poverty reduced under the BRS government.

### Over 25L devotees visit Sabarimala this season

Pathanamthitta: As Sabarimala temple is all set for Mandala Puja on Wednesday, the temple is witnessing heavy rush of the pilgrims. In order to keep the crowd under control at Nilakkal, Pampa and Sannidhanam, the police have imposed traffic regulations in edathavalams like Erumeli and various parts of Pathanamthitta. As many as 25.69 lakhs pilgrims visited Sabarimala temple till Saturday during this Mandalam-Makaravilakku pilgrimage season. On Sunday, pilgrims were forced to wait over 12 hours to reach Sannidhanam from Pampa. They started trekking at 6am on Sunday to reach Sannidhanam at 6.45 pm.

# Bharat Jodo Yatra II to include Odisha districts

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@ Bhubaneswar

At least six districts of Odisha are likely to be a part of the Bharat Jodo Yatra II - East to West - to be undertaken by former Congress president Rahul Gandhi in January ahead of elections.

Sources in the party said, Bharat Jodo Yatra in Odisha will start from Balasore and pass through Bhadrak, Cuttack, Dhenkanal, Sambalpur and Sundargarh districts. This is the tentative list of districts suggested by the state Congress to the All India Congress Committee (AICC). However, a final decision is yet to be taken.

Senior Congress leaders said that the number of districts may change in the final list. They said a clear picture will emerge within the next two to three days. But it is certain that Odisha will be part of the yatra.

President of Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Sarat Pattanayak said the route is being worked out. All aspects including the security angle is also being assessed before a final decision is taken, he said. He informed that the route chart will be announced soon.

# Muskan has links with al-Qaeda, says Kalladka

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE
@Mandya

RSS leader Kalladka Prabhakar Bhat on the premises of the Moodalabagilu Anjaneya Temple, while adressing the crowd said hijab clad girl Muskhan from Mandya has links with Al-Qaeda.

"Al-Qaeda has given money and support to Muskhan. She has contact with the terror organisation. So, the people should be careful as terrorists will be coming to Mandya," he said. Bhat said if Muslim girls are allowed to wear hijab, then Hindu students will wear saffron shawls to classes.

# EDITORIAL

"Some people go to priests, others to poetry" — Virginia Woolf

INDIAN EXPRESS IS NOT AN INDUSTRY. IT IS A MISSION.

— Ramnath Goenka

## WIN THE CONFIDENCE OF LOCALS TO CONTAIN MILITANCY IN J&K

THE December 21 terrorist attack on an Army convoy in Jammu & Kashmir's Poonch, in which five soldiers lost their lives, bares the chinks in the intelligence apparatus. Following the deadly ambush, the security forces picked up eight locals for questioning but three of them were later found dead, triggering a massive outrage in their villages. That the killed civilians were tribal Gujjar men further complicated matters. Meanwhile, the hunt for the militants involved in the attack is on and mobile Internet services continue to be suspended in Poonch and Rajouri districts.

The rising number of military casualties is a big worry for the forces. Since 2021, the Army has lost 33 personnel in Rajouri and Poonch districts. There have been 251 terrorist-initiated incidents in J&K between 2021 and May this year. In November 2023, four Army personnel including two Captains were martyred in Rajouri district. In September, two Army officers of the rank of Major and Captain, and a police officer of DySP rank were killed in action in the forests of Kokernag near Anantnag. In April, five soldiers lost their lives in a militant attack in Pir Panjal Valley in Pooch district.

While militancy has been on a downward trend in J&K post the abrogation of Article 370 in August, 2019, security forces have suffered casualties, particularly in Poonch and Rajouri districts, which fall in the Pir Panjal region and are close to the Line of Control. A heavily forested area, marked with difficult terrain, militants find it easy to hide, target convoys and security personnel before escaping to the other side, of Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir.

Most of these militants have not fallen under the radar of security personnel. While local militant recruitment has witnessed a decline, the number of foreign and hybrid (those not identified) recruits has gone up. The main reason why these terrorists remain undetected is due to the 'drying of Intelligence' at the village level. Fencing of forests for conservation purposes has reportedly restricted the movement of tribals who have families in the PoK. Earlier, they would keep a watch and report suspicious movements to the security forces. But with restrictions and a feeling of disenchantment with the administration, local intelligence is drying up.

To address this, the administration and security forces need to involve confidence-building measures, especially with the tribals in the Pir Panjal area, to counter the scourge of cross-border militancy supported by Pakistan's deep state. Nothing works better than human intelligence.

## SENIOR PARTY LEADERS' CONVICTION BLOW TO DMK

The Madras High Court's verdict convicting senior DMK leader K Ponmudy and his wife P Visalakshi in a disproportionate assets case has come as a sharp blow to the ruling party in Tamil Nadu. Ponmudy, a party veteran, was holding the key portfolio of higher education till the verdict resulted in his disqualification from the legislative assembly. The leader's political career now rests in the hands of the Supreme Court.

The case against Ponmudy was registered in 2011 after the AIADMK came to power in the state. He was accused of amassing wealth disproportionate to known sources of income with his wife's abetment. The trial court acquitted the couple by considering them as separate entities who cannot be "clubbed together". The HC, however, found this view flawed and a miscarriage of justice, stating that the trial court had failed to appreciate that the charge against Visalakshi was of abetment by holding Ponmudy's assets that he had acquired through unknown sources. The HC pointed out that trial court had accepted the income tax statements of Visalakshi as sufficient evidence for her income from various companies without examining how that income was accrued. Similarly, it had failed to accept the valuations of her agricultural income as provided by government officials, relying on her "self-serving" tax statements instead. The court sentenced the couple to three years simple imprisonment and a ₹50 lakh fine each, allowing them a month's time to surrender. The likelihood of the SC providing relief for Ponmudy appears slim.

The HC's verdict has left Ponmudy the second DMK minister to lose his portfolio in recent months, the first being V Senthil Balaji who is under investigation in a jobs scam. Others, including Ponmudy, are under enforcement directorate scrutiny as well. The development puts the party on the back foot, especially in the run-up to the general elections next year, leaving it open to opposition accusations of corruption. Three years into government, the DMK already faces the possibility of an anti-incumbency mood from the electorate. Only good and responsive governance can be a remedy.

**QUICK TAKE**

### END CHILD MARRIAGE WITH INCENTIVES

A new *Lancet Global Health* study shows that though the prevalence of child marriage in India fell sharply between 1993 and 2021, it crept up in a few states and territories during 2016-2021. While one in two girls was married before age 18 in 1993, the national average is closer to one in five now. But it is two in five in West Bengal, Tripura and Bihar, and has risen in Manipur, Punjab and Daman. Increasing inequality, forced migration and the pandemic have made things worse. Enforcing the legal ban is easier said than done. Bigger cash grants to those who marry at a proper age, especially in the laggard states, would be more effective.

The goal to become a developed nation a hundred years from independence is a worthy challenge. It can be achieved with the right mindset and people's participation

## GOOD GOVERNANCE: PATHWAY TO VIKSIT BHARAT IN 2047

M VENKAIAH NAIDU

Former Vice President of India

SOUMYADIP SINHA

AS I reflect on the annual celebration of Good Governance Day on December 25, the birth anniversary of my mentor and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, I recollect with admiration the visionary leadership of Sardar Patel, who shaped the higher civil services and laid the foundation for people-centred governance. His advice to the Indian Administrative Service officers in 1947 rings true even today: "Your predecessors were brought up in the traditions in which they kept themselves aloof from the common run of the people. It will be your bounden duty to treat the common men in India as your own." By putting people at the centre of the governance architecture, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has altered the grammar of good governance through his call to "reform, perform and transform".

The prime minister launched the Viksit Bharat Sankalp yatra on December 11. It is a defining moment in Bharat's historical journey as our country renews its commitment to be a developed country by 2047, a 100 years after it became independent. It is a resolve built on the foundation of 75 years of ceaseless toil and the newfound confidence and enhanced competence assiduously nurtured during the last 10 years.

It is a nation that is dreaming big. A nation of 1.4 billion dreams. It's a nation that wishes to become a 5-trillion-dollar economy, wants to have state-of-the-art infrastructure, provide its citizens equitable access to high-quality education and healthcare, enhance livelihood opportunities and enlarge the range of income-generating activities for its youth and women, and enthuse entrepreneurs and investors through an investor-friendly ecosystem to generate wealth and employment. It's a nation that does not want anyone to be left out of its development story.

Over the last few years, the government has placed unprecedented trust in the enormous capability of its people and has launched a number of programmes which have been quite successful because of people's participation. This is a government that could visualise *swachhata* or cleanliness as a people's movement. Janbhagidari or public participation has become the key principle of programme implementation.

In this paradigm of people-centred development, sushasan or good governance has become the most promising pathway for societal transformation for converting the gains of freedom or *swarajya* to the establishment of a well-governed state or *surajya*. The prime minister has tenaciously led this journey from the front, articulating the framework of inclusive development as "*Sabka saath, sabka vikaas, sabka vishwaas*" (Support for all, development of all and winning the confidence of all) to which was added the element of responsible citizenship and participative development through "*Sabka prayaas*" (Efforts of all).

In a recent interview, the prime minister said, "Our nation is on the cusp of a take-off." The country's rapid strides in various aspects of development have given us the power to reach this cusp. The string of achievements is truly impressive—from alleviating poverty to combating pandemics, from a national mission to strengthen foundation literacy and numeracy to creating world-class universities, from a massive financial inclusion programme to an impactful health insurance scheme, from a steadily expanding modern rail and aviation sector to spectacular space missions, from path-breaking advances in technology and pharmaceuticals to nurturing sports talent.

The path ahead is undoubtedly challenging. We have to be mindful of the fault lines, the areas that require more intense attention, some strategies that need mid-course correction and some policies that need fine-tuning.

The transformation we are envisaging is possible only through a critical appraisal of existing laws, rules and procedures and making them as people-friendly as possible, as transparent and demystified as possible, and conveyed in a user-friendly format in a language people understand. I am glad that this reform has received the personal attention of our country's leadership and many of the archaic laws have been repealed, some have been simplified and quite a few new legislations have been enacted.

Good governance is possible if every functionary in government is clear about the goals he or she has to achieve and her or his role in achieving the goals, as well as the time frame in which the tasks are expected to be completed. This goal and role clarity would be the first step. Constant capacity enhancement of functionaries through coaching and mentoring is essential. The managerial style and administrative leadership have to be revamped to facilitate this process rather than relying on the traditional command-and-control functions. The leaders must develop the art of listening to the people the government is seeking to serve; it enhances trust in government so essential in a democratic polity. Teamwork, collaboration, mutual respect, empathy and probity are traits that need to be internalised. The work ethos has to be reshaped to let these qualities bloom.

The governance system must be an agile, learning organisation, collecting credible data, analysing areas for correction and swiftly acting upon the evidence. This requires a mindset that values openness, honesty, reflection, consultation and working towards constant improvement.

If the pace of development has to be accelerated, we cannot have a business-as-usual approach. Governance has to be fit for purpose. Delivery is key. The last mile is the most difficult to reach but that's the ultimate test of our systemic strength. The low-hanging fruits are easy. We should not be satisfied with just that initial success. Leaving no one behind and ensuring that we achieve growth with equity is crucial for social harmony and sustainable, peaceful development.

PM Modi has demonstrated that technology can be leveraged for reaching out effectively to marginalised populations and cut transaction costs and petty corruption. Direct benefit transfer is one example of creative use of technology in improving last mile delivery.

In a few weeks' time, we shall be inaugurating a new temple for Lord Ram at Ayodhya, a king who, in our collective consciousness, exemplifies the values of good governance—truth, righteousness, respect for people's voice, collaborative endeavour to undertake challenging missions. There are many examples of good governance in Bharat's long history. We must draw inspiration from those examples and define the new governance systems that will ensure that we walk the path of dedication doing everything possible to create a society that cares, shares and grows, that is not shy of admitting its shortcomings and is bold enough to overcome them, that constantly reflects upon the impact of our decisions and actions on our planet, our quality of life and the quality of life of fellow human beings. Let us usher in Viksit Bharat in 2047 through *sushasit* Bharat.

## HOW PROPHET ISAIAH ENRICHES THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

RENUKA NARAYANAN

FAITHLINE

HAPPY Christmas, dear readers. I am going, as usual, to Christmas lunch at the home of dear Christian friends of decades. I have also been to Midnight Mass with them in previous years and robustly sung the hymns and carols, all of which I knew by heart. In my childhood, I would go every year to a Christmas party held by my Mina Mami. We would gather around her piano and sing as she played carols and hymns. After that we would be treated to a splendid Christmassy dinner.

When I lived in Bangkok for some years, I would go on Sundays to the Ruamrudee Church. The Hindu temple was too far away and for me the church, too, was a house of God, where I liked to go, listen to the sermon and sing. Perhaps I learnt this from my father who was visiting New York one year. My mother's *shraadh* or death anniversary occurred during that visit. My father did not trouble anyone in a foreign land to find him a priest to conduct a puja as he did for her *shraadh* at home. He slipped quietly into a pew in St Patrick's Church and murmured the beautiful twenty-third Psalm—"The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want".

But that is one of the treasures of being Indian. Religion and culture, ideally, are like a gigantic box of chocolates in which we can all dip freely and share each other's traditions. In the lead-up to this Christmas, I found myself thinking of the prophet Isaiah from the Old Testament in the Bible. His original Hebrew name is Yeshayahu, meaning 'Yahweh is salvation'. He lived in the eighth century BCE in Jerusalem and declared the coming of a messiah whom he called 'Immanuel', meaning 'God is With Us'. The events of the Book of Isaiah are said to have occurred between 740 and 680 BCE during the reigns of the Jewish kings Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz and Hezekiah which was near the time of the founding of Rome and the first Olympic games in Greece. However, Jews and Christians interpret Isaiah differently

Christians see the Old Testament through the lens of Jesus. The New Testament has four gospels or accounts of Jesus attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. In Christian tradition, The Book of Isaiah is also referred to as the 'fifth gospel' because of these proclamations: "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The young girl will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14), and, "But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed." (Isaiah 53:5). Also, poignantly, "We, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isaiah 53:6)

Isaiah, say Biblical scholars, was well-acquainted with poverty and harsh circumstances. He observed with dismay

AP

One can trace the Christmas spirit to prophet Isaiah from the Old Testament. The Book of Isaiah is referred to as the 'fifth gospel' since he made proclamations that were later fulfilled by Jesus

that the Jewish people of the time led self-indulgent lives. He was also alarmed by the impending danger to Jerusalem by the Assyrian king in his westward expansion of the kingdom.

Isaiah is said to have addressed Yahweh, the god of the Jews, with his fears for his people. He is said to have had a glorious vision of his god and though he felt inadequate, offered himself as a messenger in service of Yahweh. Thus, he was made a prophet of his time to warn that Yahweh's covenant or special understanding with the Jews, who were his 'chosen people', could turn against them if they did not lead morally directed lives. In despair, Isaiah famously cried "How long, O Lord?"

Isaiah thundered at his people, "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2). His warning did not go down well with his people. They refused to listen to him and turned him away several times. Isaiah's words are said to be addressed to the southern part of the Jewish homeland, called Judah. The northern kingdom was called Israel. Scholars say that the Book of Isaiah was partly written by Isaiah's followers, and that it took its full form in the Bible in the fifth century BCE, long after Isaiah. The Book of Isaiah grew increasingly important in Christian interpretation.

It is seen as a book of hope, promising Yahweh's mercy through verses like this: "They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations." (Isaiah 61:4), which must have greatly consoled the Jews in their exile. It promises the Jewish people that "The Lord will guide you always; he will satisfy your needs in a sun-scorched land and will strengthen your frame. You will be like a well-watered garden, like a spring whose waters never fail." (Isaiah 58:11).

Seen by Christians to fulfill Isaiah's prophecy, Jesus is believed to have said, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news." (Mark 1:15). Mark's is the first gospel. Luke, a doctor, puts it this way: "Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, "The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, 'Look, here it is!' or 'There it is!' The kingdom of God is among you." (Luke 17:20-21). John, the youngest apostle, identifies Jesus with the Word of God. Matthew, a tax collector, who referred to Isaiah, says that Jesus declared, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17). Paul preached the gospel to many thereafter. And thus, says Christian tradition, was the Christmas message relayed across time from ancient days.

*(shebaba09@gmail.com)*

## MAILBAG

**WRITE TO:** letters@newindianexpress.com

### One post

Ref: *India bloc needs a slogan, not a leader* (Dec 24). Prabhu Chawla is right in saying that the Congress defeat is a blessing in disguise. Till recently the GOP thought that it had enough power to tackle the BJP single handedly. There is a chance the parties within INDIA group may not unite as the goal of each one would be to become the PM, but unfortunately there is only one post.
**M Haneef, Kottayam**

### LDF's credibility

Ref: *Clashes, protest mar Nava Kerala Sadas culmination* (Dec 24). The Nava Kerala Sadas, throughout its journey was marred by black-flags wielding demonstrations and ugly lathi charge by the police. The yatra eroded the remaining credibility of the LDF. The bus jaunt taken by CM Pinarayi Vijayan and his cabinet looked like a great escape from the realities that the state is facing.
**S Lakshmi, Hyderabad**

### INDIA's leader?

Ref: *K'taka Cong leaders caught off-guard by 'Kharge for PM' pitch* (Dec 24). Kharge was not a unanimous choice. His name was floated by TMC and AAP for sidelining Gandhi family. The reaction in Karnataka was muted due to high command's reticence on the issue. This alliance may not choose a leader before elections to avoid disputes.
**Rajarao Kumar, Bengaluru**

### Battling pollution

The air quality index (AQI) in the national capital on Saturday morning was recorded under 'severe' category. Fog and haze, with low wind speed are the major causes. Commission for air quality management, should make strategies to combat pollution.
**Ibne Farooq, Ausanpur**

### Going bananas

Ref: *Going bananas for weight loss* (Dec 24). One should also adhere to the other components of the diet. It would be good to exercise caution on the potassium content, especially those with compromised kidney function. Dairy products—on which there is a restriction in this diet—are an important for vegetarians.
**Dr Janardhan, Neyveli**

### Grave issue

Three civilians picked up by the Army for questioning, a day after four Jawans were killed, were found dead with multiple injuries. Five more persons are admitted to hospital with serious injuries. This relates to the video that shows jawans stripping three men and putting chilli powder on them. It is a matter of great concern.
**Jayanthi S Mani, Coimbatore**

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**POSTS OF THE DAY**

**Pralhad Joshi** @JoshiPralhad
Wherever Rahul Gandhi and Priyanka Gandhi go for campaigns, Congress loses. They have withdrawn to save face. It makes no difference to BJP.

**Kunwar Danish Ali** @KDanishAli
Ask the harassed wrestlers, unemployed youth, innocents in jails, or ask me, who was abused on floor of Parliament, what suffering means.

**Mehbooba Mufti** @MehboobaMufti
One doesn't know what to condemn more. Killing of 5 army jawans who laid their lives in the line of duty or civilians tortured to death in the most barbaric way by those supposed to protect us from the enemy?

# Run-up to '24: BJP mulls 2 mega rallies of minorities

The 'alpsankhyak sabhas' will be held in January and February 2024

RAJESH KUMAR THAKUR @ New Delhi

AS a part of its strategy to win over minority communities, mostly Muslims, in the run-up to Lok Sabha elections early next year, the BJP has planned two mega 'Alpsankhyak Sabha' in January and February next year.

Aimed at creating a positive narrative among the minorities for the Modi government and its nine-year performances, the first mega 'Alpsankhyak Sabha' will be organized in Delhi in January and the second in West Bengal's Malda district in February. Jamal Siddiqui, national president of the BJP Minority Morcha, told this newspaper on Sunday that the first such Sabha would most probably be attended and addressed by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Delhi.

"We expect more than 25,000 people from various minority communities including Muslims, Modi-Mitras, Sufi scholars and other prominent people from various walks of life belonging to Muslims and other communities," he said.

"We'd request Home Minister Amit Shah to attend the second Sabha and address various issues concerning the minority people," said Siddiqui. Party chief JP Nadda will attend both Sabhas, he added.

"The dates are being decided taking into account the availability of chief guests," he said. The BJP has also decided to organize the 'Alpsankhyak-Samvad' in each assembly segment ahead of the LS elections.

The Samvad-Karyakarm (dialogue programme) will include prominent people from minority communities, including 2 lakh Modi Mitras and Sufi saints. They will deliberate on welfare schemes with party leaders and discuss measures initiated by the government in the last nine years.

"There Alpsankhyak Samvad will be a two-way communication," he said. The Minority Morcha has made 2.5 lakh Modi Mitras from Muslim and other minority communities who have liked the performance of the Modi government.

Meanwhile, a senior party source said various BJP fronts are carrying out a slew of activities and outreach programmes intending to win over 350 seats in the 2024 general election.

"The Modi Mitra is an innovative initiative of BJP Minority Morcha for those who are not in politics but like Modi's works and support him based on his works," he said.

Ahead of the proposed Alpsankhyak Sabha, a conference of Modi Mitras was recently held in Malda. The Morcha has recently also organised a 'Sufi Samvad Maha Abhiyan' in Delhi with the participation of the Sufis from various Dargahs of Delhi. He said Modi Mitras have been made in 65 Lok Sabha constituencies.

**'ALPSANKHYAK-SAMVAD' IN EACH CONSTITUENCY**

The dates for Alpsankhyak Sabha' are being decided taking into account the availability of chief guests. The BJP has also decided to organize the 'Alpsankhyak-Samvad' in each assembly segment ahead of the LS elections. The dialogue programme will include prominent people from minority communities, including 2 lakh Modi Mitras and Sufi saints.

# EAM to talk trade in local currency on 4-day Russia visit

YESHI SELI @ New Delhi

WHILE this is the second year in a row that the India-Russia Summit has not been held, External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar is scheduled to visit Russia for four days from December 25. The visit is part of an ongoing high-level exchange between the two nations.

"During the visit, Jaishankar will meet with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Trade and Industry, Denis Manturov, and Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. There will be discussions on bilateral issues, multilateral issues and international issues. The focus will also be on the strong people-to-people and cultural ties amongst the two nations. Jaishankar will have meetings in Saint Petersburg and Moscow," said the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) in a statement.

The India-Russia relations are considered 'Special and Privileged Strategic Partnership'.

Discussions are likely to be held on the expansion of trade in local currencies, investments and enhancing defence partnership.

**Trade**

India-Russia bilateral trade in 2022-23 was $49.36 billion. Indian exports were in the range of $3.14 billion, while imports from Russia were around $46.21 billion. During April-May 2023-24, India's trade with Russia saw 161.22 per cent increase YoY.

The bilateral trade between India and Russia during 2022-23 was $49.36 billion. Indian exports were in the range of $3.14 billion, while imports from Russia were around $46.21 billion. During April-May 2023-24, India's trade with Russia saw 161.22 per cent increase compared to the same period last year.

Meanwhile, the last annual summit between Prime Minister of India and President of Russian Federation was held on December 6, 2021. That was the 21st India-Russia Annual Summit held in Delhi, and was attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Prime Minister Modi was to visit Russia in 2022. However, the outbreak of the conflict between Russia and Ukraine on February 24, 2022, led to the summit being skipped for the second consecutive year.

## POWER GAMES

SHAHID FARIDI
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### Battle for UP

**AKHILESH THREATENS TO QUIT INDIA OVER BSP**

Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav's seemingly unprovoked outburst at the December 19 INDIA meeting over the possible inclusion of Bahujan Samaj Party in the opposition grouping left most of the attendees shocked. Akhilesh had announced at the meeting that his party would quit INDIA if the Bahujan Samaj Party was brought on board. He said he has heard that a move is afoot to rope in Mayawati. The leaders of opposition parties present in the meeting were surprised by the SP chief's comments as there has been no discussion on the induction of the BSP in any of the four meetings of the group held so far. According to sources, Akhilesh feels that a powerful section of the Congress is keen to ally with the BSP in Uttar Pradesh and it is only a matter of time before the induction of the party in the opposition group is proposed. His statement at the meeting was an attempt to pre-empt any such proposal. Mayawati, who has kept away from both the INDIA bloc and the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance, was quick to remind the opposition leaders that "no one knows who might need whom in the future for the sake of the public and the country". Directly targeting Akhilesh Yadav, she said parties that make such statements may face embarrassment later. Mayawati's quick response to Akhilesh's outburst is being seen as her readiness to do business with the opposition. The main battle for the 2024 elections is likely to be fought in Uttar Pradesh with both the ruling and opposition parties preparing to pull out all the stops.

### Strategic Alliance

**CONG TO REOPEN TALKS WITH PRASHANT KISHOR**

The Congress is likely to restart talks with poll strategist-turned-politician Prashant Kishor. The earlier talks between the two had broken down as Kishor wanted a position next to the Congress president with a free hand to manage all elections for the party. The party refused to accept his proposal as it would have rendered the entire party structure powerless with all powers, including selecting state presidents, conducting surveys and choosing candidates, going to Kishor. But the situation has now changed with Kishor confining himself to Bihar, where the Congress has no leader of repute. According to sources, Congress leadership has expressed interest in working with Kishor in Bihar for the next Lok Sabha election. Kishor too has indicated his readiness by announcing that he is closer to the ideology of the Congress than that of any other party. Sources said that the newly-appointed Congress incharge of Bihar Mohan Prakash is likely to be asked to start discussions with Kishor. Congress leaders did not rule out the possibility of fielding Kishor as an opposition alliance candidate in the Lok Sabha elections from Bihar. Congress also plans to use Kishor's services to manage the party's campaign in the next general election. His former deputy Sunil Kanugolu has delivered stellar results for the party in the Karnataka and Telangana assembly elections. This has reaffirmed the party's faith in professional poll managers. Kishor and Kanugolu are likely to handle Congress campaign in the next election.

# 2 months after PMO order, NMC members yet to disclose assets on website

KAVITA BAJELI-DATT @ New Delhi

DESPITE directions from the Prime Minister's Office (PMO ) two months ago, the National Medical Commission (NMC) members are yet to declare their assets online.

The PMO directed the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to take "appropriate action" on a complaint against non-disclosure of assets by NMC members, including its chairman, on October 23.

In fact, NMC has written to the ministry — at least twice — to change the disclosure format. According to the letters, some members have reservations with the present format, where they have to give complete details of land, jewellery, investments in banks, insurance policies, etc.

As per the NMC Act 2019, the chairman and members must declare their assets and liabilities on the official website.

However, despite several RTIs in this regard, the NMC chairman and its members have failed to declare their assets on the website, said Dr K V Babu, who has been doggedly pursuing the matter for months. "It is clear that the NMC has been sitting over the assets disclosure for the past two-and-half years, and it seems that the health ministry, which is legally mandated to enforce the NMC Act, is sleeping over it for more than six months, despite several RTIs in this regard," the RTI activist said.

"What is more shocking is that even after the communication from the PMO, both the NMC and health ministry continue to drag the issue. Hope the NMC will comply with the NMC Act, given the communication from the PMO, and non-complying officers are removed," he added.

"If the Supreme Court and High Court judges can declare their assets publicly, why can't the NMC members and its chairman?" the activist asked.

# Navy to commission indigenous stealth destroyer INS Imphal

MAYANK SINGH @ New Delhi

THE Indian Navy will commission its latest Stealth Guided Missile Destroyer **INS Imphal**, being constructed under the Project 15-B, at Naval Dockyard in Mumbai on Tuesday.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will be the chief guest for the commissioning ceremony.

"The time taken to build Imphal and for her trials is the shortest for any indigenous destroyer," the Navy said.

Imphal's keel was laid on May 19, 2017 and the ship was launched into water on 20 April 2019. Imphal sailed out for her maiden sea trials on 28 April 2023 and completed a comprehensive schedule of trials, both in the harbour and at sea, leading up to its Delivery on 20 October 2023, within a record time frame of six months - the fastest for a ship of its size."

It is the first warship to have been named after a city from the North East, the approval for which was accorded by the President on April 16, 2019, Indian Navy PRO Commander Vivek Madhwal said.

On November 28, Rajnath Singh unveiled the ship's crest at New Delhi, in the presence of the Manipur Chief Minister, N Biren Singh, CDS Gen Anil Chauhan and Indian Navy chief Admiral R Hari Kumar and other senior dignitaries.

The ship once commissioned will join the Western Naval Command. Imphal is a state-of-the-art warship, designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and built by MDL, with significant contributions from the public and private sectors, including MSMEs, and the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

Measuring 163 metres in length, displacing 7,400 tons and with 75% indigenous content, Imphal can rightfully be regarded as one of the most potent warships to have been constructed in India.

The ship is equipped to fight under Nuclear, Biological and Chemical warfare conditions and has a high degree of automation and stealth features.

# Man-elephant conflict: 1,701 people dead in 3 years

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

DESPITE the government initiating measures, wild elephants have killed as many as 1,701 people in 16 states between 2020 and 2023 with the highest of 605 casualties reported in 2022-23.

According to the government data, of the total casualties in 2022-23, a total of 148 deaths were reported from Odisha, followed by West Bengal with 97, and Chhattisgarh with 96 in addition to others. The figure stood at 535 in 2021-22.

In 2020-21, a total of 461 human casualties were reported that rose to 535 the following year in states which have wider and dense forest coverage housing considerable number of elephants.

While Jharkhand had reported the highest number of 133 casualties due to in 2021-22, Odisha replaced it the next year 148 deaths, the government data indicates.

As per an official data shared by the government during the recent Rajya Sabha session, Odisha had reported the highest number of 93 human casualties in 2020-21, overtaken by Jharkhand in 2021-22 with 133 human casualties.

Notably, all these 16 states have not only reported human casualties, but also elephant deaths due to various reasons.

In the last five years — 2018-19 to 2022-23 — the 16 states had reported total deaths of 75 elephants after being knocked down by trains passing through the forest areas.

"Fifteen elephants were killed in 2022-23 and 2021-22, while 14 died in 2019-20. In 2018-19, the figure was the highest with 19 jumbos losing their lives after being knocked down by the locomotives of trains in 10 states — Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Tripura, Odisha, Kerala, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Assam," said an official data.

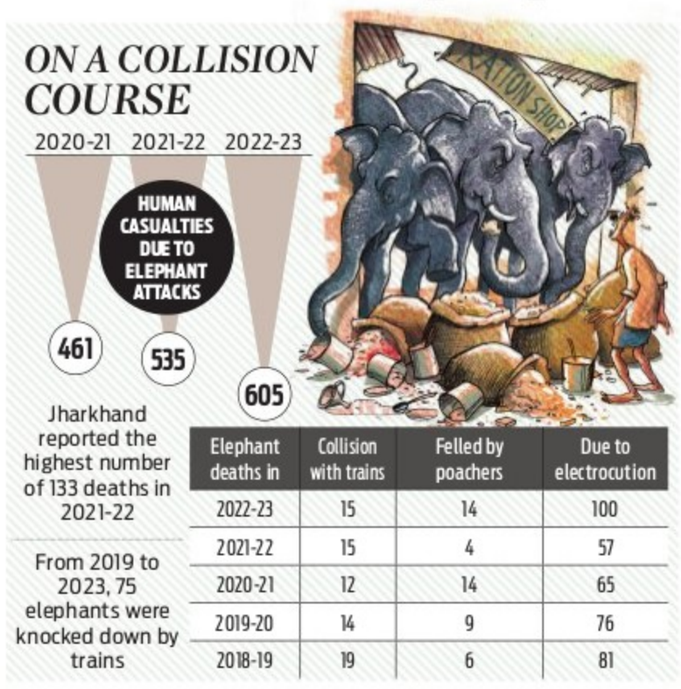
Similarly, a total of 379 elephant lives were lost to electrocution in the last 5 years in 10 states, including 100 in 2022-23, 57 in 2021-22, 65 in 2020-21, 76 in 2019-20 and 81 in 2018-19.

In 2022-23, the deaths of 14 elephants due to poaching were reported, 4 in 2021-22, 14 in 2020-21, 9 in 2019-20 and 6 in 2018-19 from 16 states namely, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, UP, Uttarakhand, Odisha, Meghalaya, Kerala, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and other states.

In total, 47 elephant casualties were reported in last 5 years from across the 16 states due to poaching.

Odisha again reported the highest number of 8 elephant casualties due to poaching in 2022-23, followed Meghalaya with 3. In 2021-22, Tamil Nadu had reported the highest number of 3 elephant casualties, compared to 7 in Meghalaya in 2020-21.

As per the government data, 21 elephants were poisoned to deaths in the 16 states in the last 5 years with the highest number being of six reported from Assam in 2021-22.




| Elephant deaths in | Collision with trains | Felled by poachers | Due to electrocution |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2022-23 | 15 | 14 | 100 |
| 2021-22 | 15 | 4 | 57 |
| 2020-21 | 12 | 14 | 65 |
| 2019-20 | 14 | 9 | 76 |
| 2018-19 | 19 | 6 | 81 |

# India may miss international target of eliminating child labour by 2025

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @ New Delhi

A parliamentary standing committee on labour, textiles and skill development in its 52nd report on 'National Policy on Child Labourers' has said that it was "practically not possible" to meet the international commitment to eliminating child labour by 2025.

The panel took into account the current prevalence of child labour to reach its conclusion. The report was recently submitted in Parliament.

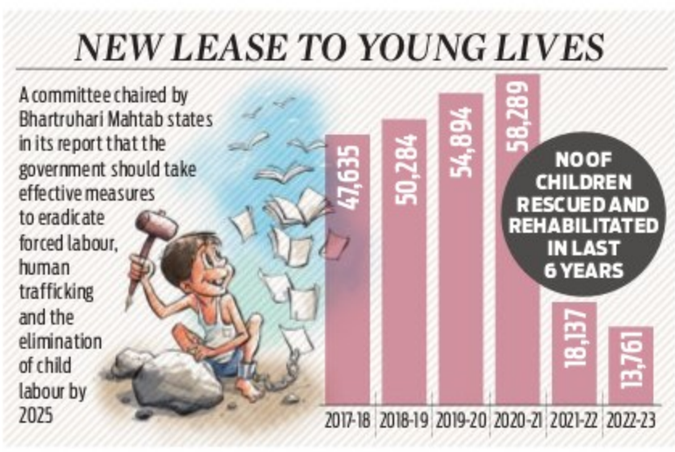
The committee has impressed upon the Ministry of Labour and Employment to take up the elimination of child labour in a mission mode by devising a systematic action plan-based policy to meet international commitments.

The committee, chaired by Bhartruhari Mahtab, has stated in the report that the government should take effective measures to eradicate forced labour, human trafficking and the elimination of child labour by 2025. After wider consultations with state governments and other stakeholders, the committee has stated in the report that "despite a revision of penalties, there is no deterrence on the employer and as informed by NGOs, children after being rescued are again employed in the same jobs."

Alarmed at the recurrence, the committee has emphasized making laws more stringent for employers and violators. It suggested increasing at least 3-4 times the penalty with stricter punishment in the form of cancellations of licence and attachment of property.

It has also cited data collected from the Ministry based on the census 2011 that 1.01 crore children are working in various fields. The main children workers are those who have to work more than six months and those who work less than 6 months after being employed. They are called working children.

According to data, cited by the committee as per the 2001 census, 57,54,201 children are main workers in the age group of 5-14 years in agriculture, mining and 8 other industries.



**TRAIN ON FIRE**

A fire broke out in the pantry car of the Delhi-bound Sadbhavana Express near the Shivanagar Railway station of the district on Sunday, officials said. The passengers in the adjoining coaches alighted from the trainon time.

02 KILLED IN ACCIDENT IN RAJASTHAN

| INDIA | Max | Min | | Max | Min |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ahmedabad | 42 | 27 | Mumbai | 35 | 29 |
| Bhopal | 43 | 28 | Panaji | 32 | 28 |
| Jaipur | 41 | 30 | Patna | 41 | 27 |
| Amritsar | 40 | 23 | Lucknow | 42 | 27 |
| Chennai | 39 | 30 | Port Blair | 34 | 28 |
| Kolkata | 36 | 26 | Imphal | 23 | 18 |
| Srinagar | 18 | 08 | Chandigarh | 42 | 23 |

# PM to make poor self-reliant: Shah

Says crores of people have benefited from govt's welfare schemes, more in the pipeline

DILIP SINGH KSHATRIYA @ Ahmedabad

Home Minister Amit Shah, Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel in Ahmedabad on Sunday | PTI

UNION Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday said Prime Minister Narendra Modi wants to make 140 crore people, including the poor, in the country 'atmanirbhar' (self-reliant) and has worked with dedication for it. PM Modi wants to make India self-reliant in space technology and defence, and also aims to make the poor people self-reliant, Shah said addressing a gathering of beneficiaries of the PM SVANidhi scheme, which helps street vendors get easy loans.

The Union minister said poor people have benefited the most under the Modi government.

Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel was also present in the function to give loans to beneficiaries of the Prime Minister Street Vendor's AtmaNirbhar Nidhi (PM-SVANidhi scheme). Shah is on a day's visit to his constituency where he is scheduled to attend various events. "In the last nine years, around 3 crore people got their own homes, four crore people got electricity connections, 10 crore people got gas cylinders, 12 crore people got toilets, 80 crore people got free ration, and 60 crore people have been covered under the Rs 5 lakh health insurance (scheme)," Shah said.

Various schemes are being implemented to bring the poor people out of poverty, Shah said. "The vision of a developed India includes not just highways, overbridges, and the Moon landing. Every Indian citizen must get a house, drinking water, electricity, a gas cylinder, besides the poor should get 5 kg of grain. That is the vision of a developed India," said the Union Home Minister.

"We finished the onerous task of defending 140 crore citizens of the nation against the Covid-19 outbreak by developing our vaccine under the direction of Prime Minister Narendra Modi in trying circumstances. We also sent vaccinations to other nations," Shah said.

Talking about the success of the PM-SVANidhi scheme, he said: "In my constituency (Gandhinagar in Gujarat), over 1.5 lakh people have availed of the benefit of PM-SVANidhi scheme, under which financial assistance is given to those who are running small businesses and handcarts without any collateral," he said. In Kalol, Shah said it was Prime Minister Modi who paid "real tributes" to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel by building the Statue of Unity and a dedicated museum for him. He accused the Congress of ignoring his contribution.

The Statue of Unity, built in honour of Sardar Patel, near the Sardar Sarovar Dam in Gujarat's Narmada district is the tallest such structure in the world at 182 metres. It was inaugurated by PM Modi in October 2018. Addressing a gathering after inaugurating a statue of Sardar Patel in Kalol, the senior BJP leader said that the Congress party did not even build a memorial for him where he was cremated.

"You would not know the work done by Sardar Patel if you did not travel out of Gujarat. When I was in Gujarat, I used to think that I knew everything about him. But after I went out (of the state) as party functionary, I could comprehend task he carried out," said Shah.

### 'PM-SVANidhi scheme'

Talking about the success of the PM-SVANidhi scheme, Amit Shah pointed out that in his constituency (Gandhinagar in Gujarat), over 1.5 lakh people have availed of the benefit of PM-SVANidhi scheme, under which financial assistance is given to those who are running small businesses and handcarts without any collateral. In Kalol, Shah said it was Prime Minister Modi who paid "real tributes" to Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel by building the Statue of Unity and a dedicated museum for him. He accused the Congress of ignoring his contribution

# Yadav to meet Guv, set to expand his ministerial team

ANURAAG SINGH @ Bhopal

AFTER meeting BJP president JP Nadda in Delhi, MP Chief Minister Mohan Yadav confirmed that the new ministers will be sworn in at Bhopal on Monday afternoon. As per sources, over 25 ministers may take oath on Monday, including eight to ten new faces.

The new MP CM Dr Mohan Yadav who has been in Delhi since Saturday evening (third time within a week) meeting senior national BJP leaders will return to Bhopal on Sunday late night, after meeting the party's national president JP Nadda.

He will meet the MP Governor Mangubhai C Patel on Monday morning to seek time for the swearing in of the new ministers. The swearing in ceremony of the new ministers is likely on the same afternoon.

As per informed sources in the state government and the BJP, a total of 18-22 ministers could be sworn in. The size of the cabinet cannot exceed 35, including the CM.

Dr Yadav's first team of ministers is likely to be a blend of old and new faces, MLAs from all six regions, major castes and all key Lok Sabha constituencies.

Though the list of the BJP MLAs likely to take oath is yet not out, sources claimed that out of the 18-22 ministers, to be sworn in on Monday, 8-10 could be new faces. It, however, remains to be seen if any of the heavyweights, including party's national general secretary Kailash Vijayvargiya and Prahlad Singh Patel (both were in CM's race) are sworn in as ministers in the new council of ministers or not.

### Blend of old & new faces

MP CM Dr Mohan Yadav's first team of ministers is likely to be a blend of old and new faces, MLAs from all six regions, major castes and all key Lok Sabha constituencies. Though the list of the BJP MLAs likely to take oath is yet not out, sources claimed that out of the 18-22 ministers, to be sworn in on Monday, 8-10 could be new faces. The size of the cabinet cannot exceed 35.

## CHANDIGARH DIARY

HARPREET BAJWA
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### Why no MLA fund in Punjab: Oppn to AAP

With the AAP government increasing the MLA Local Development Fund (MLALAD) from ₹4 to ₹7 crore, the Opposition in Punjab has started questioning senior AAP leader and Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann over the absence of such funds in the state. Sandeep Jakhar, the Congress MLA from Abohar, said during the Assembly poll campaign, AAP promised to replicate the 'Delhi model' of health, education and power in the state. "Mann sir, as you are always telling us that the treasury is full, maybe it's time to implement this Delhi model in Punjab too.... here MLALAD fund is zero," he posted on X.

### Home minister lauds Chandigarh Police

During his visit to Chandigarh, Union Home Minister Amit Shah lauded the UT Police for its beat system, which he said, other UTs and States are copying, and several innovative measures taken by the force. Recently, Chandigarh Police held hackathons to utilise youth knowledge. Shah said platforms like hackathons will help in solving the problems being faced by the people. The home minister also held a meeting with Chandigarh DGP Praveer Ranjan and other senior officers and asked them to prepare a road map for better implementation of laws.

### Shah lays foundation stone for projects

Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently visited Chandigarh and inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for projects worth ₹400 crore. Punjab Governor Banwarilal Purohit, who is also the administrator of the UT and Chandigarh Mayor Anup Gupta, were among the dignitaries present on the occasion. However, the event was given a miss by Kirron Kher, senior BJP leader and Member of Parliament from the UT, leading to several speculations. Meanwhile, as the home minister was present, the Punjab Governor utilised the oppurtunity to discuss the issue of the vacant UT Adviser post. The Ministry of Home Affairs is yet to name his replacement.

**LAND LAWS**

# Organizations & Oppn unite in Dehradun rally

NARENDRA SETHI @ Dehradun

ON the call of various social organisations and opposition parties, the "Uttarakhand Mool Niwas Swabhiman Maharally" was organized in Dehradun on Sunday. The objective of the Maharally was to enact the domicile law in Uttarakhand, especially to emphasise the cut-off date of 26 January 1950 and to put before the government the demand for implementing a strong land law in the state.

Several social organisations, assembled under the Uttarakhand Moolniwas Swabhiman Samanvay Samiti, held a massive rally and later marched in Dehradun on Sunday to advocate for their demands of a stringent land law and increasing employment opportunities for local residents.

Mohit Dimri, convener of Samiti said, "This is a fight for the honour and rights of the people of Uttarakhand. On behalf of the government, the members linked with the Sangharsh Samiti were contacted and requested to postpone the rally". On Sunday, transgenders also joined the agitation where they demanded the government to strengthen strict land laws and domicile laws.

# Maha Assembly ousts convicted Cong MLA over ₹125 cr bank fraud

SUDHIR SURYAWANSHI @ Mumbai

FOLLOWING the conviction by the Nagpur Special magistrate court, the Maharashtra state legislature disqualified former minister and Congress MLA **Sunil Kedar** on Saturday in connection with ₹125 crore financial irregularities in Nagpur District Central Cooperative Bank (NDCCB) in 2002

Maharashtra state legislature secretary Jitendra Bhole issued the notifications disqualifying Congress MLA Sunil Kedar. As per the provisions in Article 191 (1)(e) of the Constitution of India read with Section 8 of the Representation of People's Act. The action was taken after Nagpur police informed the legislature about the conviction.

"Now, therefore, in accordance with sub-clause (a)of clause (3) of article 190 of the Constitution of India, the seat of Shri Kedar, has become vacant from the date of his conviction, i.e. 22nd December 2023," the notification said.

Maharashtra Congress spokesperson Atul Londe Patil said when it comes to disqualifying BJP MLA, the ruling party uses all loopholes of the law and protects their elected representatives even though they are convicted by the court. He said the law should be equal for everyone, but there are different sets of law, one for the ruling establishment while another for the Oppositions and people who are raising their dissent against the establishment.

"We do respect the court decisions against Kedar in the 22 years old case, but why so much hurry to disqualify him? If BJP MLAs and MPs are found guilty by the court in a case, they are given ample opportunity to appeal the court ruling and the ruling party also makes all efforts to save these convicted elected representatives. The laws are brazenly misused by the ruling party to cut the opposition in size," Patil said.

# Bengal Guv removes Jadavpur VC ahead of 'unauthorised convocation'

PRANAB MONDAL @ Kolkata

WEST Bengal governor **C.V. Ananda Bose**, late on Saturday, removed the officiating vice-chancellor of Jadavpur University, Budhhadeb Sau, a day before the university is scheduled to hold its annual convocation and warned that the expenses incurred to organise the 'unauthorised' convocation would be deducted from Sau's salary. Sau on Sunday defied the governor's order and officiated the university's annual convocation.

"The decision to continue as the acting VC of the university is for the sake of the students of the institution," said Sau.

The governor's decision came after the university authorities decided to go ahead with its annual convocation event on December 24 after getting a permission from the state higher education department, despite objections raised by the governor, the ex-officio chancellor of all state-run universities.

"The authorisation given to Prof Budhhadeb Sau dated August 17, 2023, to exercise the powers and perform duties of the office of the vice-chancellor, is withdrawn. The order will take immediate effect," stated the letter.

**The executive council meeting was held on December 18 and modalities of the convocation were discussed. The university requested higher education department to grant funds for organising the convocation** — Official of the university

A Raj Bhavan official said the governor, who is also the chancellor of the university, has said that the public money incurred on this unauthorised convocation would be recovered from the salary of the VC and others responsible. "The governor is seeking legal opinion on this," he added.

The state higher education department granted permission to university authorities to hold meetings of the executive council and the court to discuss issues related to organising the convocation, clearing the path for annual convocation but not the honorary degree event on December 24.

"The executive council meeting was held on December 18 and modalities of the convocation were discussed. The university authorities requested the higher education department to grant funds for organising the convocation," said an official of the university.

The problem surfaced when the governor, as a chancellor, refused to allow the authorities to hold the court meeting to ratify decisions to go ahead with the convocation.

Sau said he received two letters, one from the governor and the other from the state government. "I put both the letters before the University's court which asked me to continue," he said,

### 'Money to be recovered'

A Raj Bhavan official said the governor, who is also the chancellor of the university, has said that the public money incurred on unauthorised convocation would be recovered from the salary of the VC and others responsible. "The governor is seeking legal opinion on this," he added. Sau defied governor's order and held the convocation

# 1 lakh join Gita chant, PM says good for harmony

PRANAB MONDAL @ Kolkata

BJP supporters, devotees at Bhagwad Gita recitation event in Kolkata on Sunday | PTI

EXTENDING his best wishes to the Gita recitation event by one lakh participants in Brigade Parade Ground on Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi expressed his belief that the recitation by a huge gathering from diverse backgrounds will not only enhance social harmony but also infuse energy into nation's development journey.

Though the organisers of the event, Lokhho Konthe Gitapatha Committee, an association of several organisations, claimed that the Prime Minister would be present at the mega programme but Modi skipped the invitation.

"I am positive that the recitation of Srimad Bhagavad Gita by such a huge gathering of people who have come together from different walks of life will not only boost social harmony but will also infuse energy into our nation's development journey," Modi said in his message to the organisers.

In his message, Modi described the Hindu scripture as a practical guide providing a path to lead a meaningful life. "It also serves as a handbook to navigate through the challenges of life," he said.

The Prime Minister highlighted India's cultural heritage as a blend of lofty traditions, profound knowledge and philosophical-wisdom. "Inclusivity, cultural diversity and harmony are our inherent strengths. Whether it is Jana Bhakti, Karma or any other path, the Gita offers multiple different but eventually connected paths to attain progress," he mentioned in the message.

Modi concluded his message by expressing his optimism about the period until 2047, describing it as an opportunity to fulfil the vision of building a strong, developed and inclusive Bharat through collective efforts.

Sharing Modi's message on his official social media account, BJP's state president Sukanta Majumdar emphasised the unwavering support received from the Prime Minister as encouraging and heartwarming for all. The Brigade Parade Ground, Kolkata's prime seat to organise protest programmes, echoed when about 1 lakh people chanted verses from Gita.

Adorned in traditional attires, people from various age groups and social status congregated at the iconic venue.

Though the event was said to be an apolitical one, but many found it was organised to spred BJP's Hindutva rhetoric as the organisers have connections with the saffron camp's ideological wings. Many said the event was organised days before the grand inauguration of Ram Mandir in Ayodhya at the hands of Modi ahead of the next year's Lok Sabha polls.

### 'Cultural blend'

Prime Minister Narendra Modi highlighted India's cultural heritage as a blend of lofty traditions, profound knowledge and philosophical-wisdom. "Inclusivity, cultural diversity and harmony are our inherent strengths. Whether it is Jana Bhakti, Karma or any other path, the Gita offers multiple different but eventually connected paths to attain progress," In his message, Modi described the Hindu scripture as a practical guide providing a path to lead a meaningful life

# In a first, J'khand's Gumla to equip all govt buildings with QR codes

MUKESH RANJAN @ Ranchi

IN one of its kind initiative in the country, Gumla district administration is equipping all government buildings and public assets with QR codes so that one can get any information on their mobile phones about it by scanning the QR code put on the building.

According to officials, one can simply scan the QR code and rate the government building or can flag issues like poor maintenance or poor services being provided in the building.

Gumla Deputy Commissioner Karn Satyarthi came up with the concept of a digital district assets register, through which one can have access to any project being undertaken in their area by a single click on their computer.

Satyarthi informed that one can also record a 45 second video and upload his or her grievances which will then be resolved by the district administration. According to the Deputy Commissioner, the initiative will help them bring in transparency, make government departments as well as contractors more accountable, besides helping the district administration in planning future projects in a better fashion and also help them in detecting duplication in effort through different departments.

"All government buildings and public assets are being equipped with a QR code through which one can get all the details about it, the complete life history or lifecycle of that particular building, the exact cost estimate of the project, start and completion time, the contractor undertaking the project and photographs of the ongoing project. One can also rate the building giving it one to five stars on the basis of his or her experiences after visiting the place," said Satyarthi.

One can also record a 45 second video and register his or her complaint highlighting the shortcomings in the building or give positive feedback about it, he added.

Satyarthi said that the initiative will also help in getting information about the any building located in distant remote areas, whether it is not in use or it is getting dilapidated and about to collapse, so that action could be taken accordingly. It will help in maintaining transparency and monitoring the overruns projects, he said.

QR codes are also being installed on under-construction buildings so that their progress could be monitored. As of now, nearly 300 buildings have been covered with a target to install the codes in the next 2 months.

### 'Register complaint'

One can also record a 45 second video and register his or her complaint highlighting the shortcomings in the building or give positive feedback about it, he added. the initiative will also help in getting information about the any building located in distant remote areas, whether it is not in use or it is getting dilapidated and about to collapse, so that action could be taken accordingly. It will also monitor overrrun projects

NINE
members of the same family in Pakistan, a woman and her eight kids were killed after roof collapsed

**GLOBAL WEATHER**

LR: Light Rain • HR: Heavy Rain • TDS: Thundershower • LC: Light Cloud • SNY: Sunny

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Beijing | 29 | 16 | SNY | Los Angeles | 26 | 17 | LC |
| Colombo | 29 | 24 | LC | Melbourne | 25 | 12 | HR |
| Dhaka | 32 | 27 | SNY | Moscow | 21 | 8 | HR |
| Dubai | 39 | 31 | SNY | New York | 26 | 16 | LC |
| Houston | 31 | 23 | SNY | Singapore | 32 | 27 | SNY |
| Istanbul | 29 | 17 | SNY | Toronto | 19 | 11 | LC |
| London | 24 | 13 | LC | Washington | 27 | 14 | SNY |

# A weekend of combat in Gaza kills 15 Israeli soldiers

War exacting heavy price on army but fight will continue, says Netanyahu

**TEL AVIV**

FIFTEEN Israeli soldiers have been killed in combat in Gaza over the weekend, the Israeli military said on Sunday, while tentative efforts continued on a deal for another exchange of hostages for Palestinians held by Israel.

The 15 Israeli soldiers killed on Friday and Saturday died in central and southern Gaza, a sign of how Hamas still puts up tough resistance even as Israel claims to have dealt the militant group a serious blow.

"The war exacts a very heavy price from us but we have no choice but to continue fighting," Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu said. "This is a difficult morning, after a very difficult day of fighting in Gaza. "Let it be clear: This will be a long war," Netanyahu added.

Meanwhile, the Israeli army indicated its forces were close to having operational control in north Gaza, after weeks of intense fighting.

Now, "we focus our efforts against Hamas in southern Gaza," military spokesman Jonathan Conricus said.

Fighting has raged in Khan Yunis, the birthplace of Yahya Sinwar, Hamas's leader in Gaza and the man Israel holds most responsible for the attack that sparked the war.

The Israeli army said it had attacked about 200 targets in Gaza over the past day.

Also, the head of the World Health Organization said on Sunday that the health system in Gaza was being destroyed and reiterated his call for a ceasefire. Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus also hailed Gaza's medical workers who continue their work under increasingly dire circumstances.

"The decimation of the Gaza health system is a tragedy," he posted on X.

"We persist in calling for CeasefireNow. In the face of constant insecurity and inflows of wounded patients, we see doctors, nurses, ambulance drivers and more continue striving to save lives," he said.

The health ministry in Hamas-run Gaza said on Sunday at least 20,424 people have been killed in the Palestinian territory since the start of the war.

The toll included 166 deaths in the past 24 hours, it said, and 54,036 people had been wounded. *Agencies*

Israeli soldiers carry the flag-draped casket of Staff Sgt. Birhanu Kassie during his funeral at Mt. Herzl military cemetery in Jerusalem on Sunday | AP

**NIGHT WITHOUT LIGHTS**

## *On Christmas Eve, Biblical birthplace of Jesus mirrors ghost town*

**BETHLEHEM**

THE normally bustling Biblical birthplace of Jesus resembled a ghost town on Sunday, as Christmas Eve celebrations in Bethlehem were called off due to the Israel-Hamas war.

The festive lights and Christmas tree that normally decorate Manger Square were missing, as were the throngs of foreign tourists and jubilant youth marching bands that gather in the West Bank town each year to mark the holiday. Dozens of Palestinian security forces patrolled the empty square.

"This year, without the Christmas tree and without lights, there's just darkness," said Brother John Vinh, a Franciscan monk from Vietnam who has lived in Jerusalem for more than six years.

He said he always comes to Bethlehem to mark Christmas, but this year was especially sobering, as he gazed at a nativity scene in Manger Square with a baby Jesus wrapped in a white shroud, reminiscent of the thousands of children killed in the fighting in Gaza.

The cancellation of Christmas festivities is a severe blow to the town's economy. Tourism accounts for an estimated 70% of Bethlehem's income—almost all of that during the Christmas season.

With many major airlines cancelling flights to Israel, few foreigners are visiting. Local officials say over 70 hotels in Bethlehem have been forced to close, leaving thousands of people unemployed.

Gift shops were slow to open on Christmas Eve, although a few did once the rain had stopped pouring down. There were few visitors, however.

"We can't justify putting out a tree and celebrating as normal, when some people (in Gaza) don't even have houses to go to," said Ala'a Salameh, one of the owners of Afteem Restaurant. *AP*

A priest walks by Church of the Nativity, believed to be the birthplace of Jesus on Christmas Eve in Bethlehem | AP

## Keep relatives away from corruption, cautions Xi

**BEIJING**

CHINESE President Xi Jinping has warned senior ruling Communist Party officials to maintain personal integrity, set strict rules for relatives to keep them away from corruption and refrain from blindly following foreign examples and reckless actions.

"Members of the Political Bureau of the CPC (Communist Party of China) Central Committee should exert rigorous requirements on themselves according to the standards of Marxist statesmen, setting an example in maintaining personal integrity and self-discipline for the whole Party," Xi said. "They must set strict rules for their family members, relatives, and staff workers around them when it comes to the efforts against corruption," Xi added.

The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection (CCDI), the anti-corruption unit of the CPC, said corruption was becoming harder to detect and plans to extend the crackdown on extravagant government spending, especially during the Spring festival and Chinese New Year to be celebrated in February next year.

During the festival season, Chinese officials in the past were accused of accepting extravagant gifts for favours.

The CCDI said that in the first 10 months of the year, it investigated 80,000 violations of the anti-extravagance regulations and 1,14,238 people were placed under investigation.

Of those, 80,096 have faced party or administrative disciplinary action. *PTI*

## *Polish president says will veto state media subsidies*

POLISH PRESIDENT ANDRZEJ DUDA ON SATURDAY SAID HE WOULD VETO STATE MEDIA SUBSIDIES PROPOSED IN A BUDGET-RELATED BILL AS PART OF A ROW OVER THE GOVERNMENT'S REFORM OF STATE MEDIA

**FACING CRITICISM**

Andrzej Duda had been criticised by some in the former ruling Law and Justice (PiS) party for not doing enough after after the Prime Minister Donald Tusk's government moved to sack the management of state media earlier this week

The move prompted a sit-in by PiS lawmakers in the offices of the state broadcaster, which had become a government mouthpiece during eight years of PiS rule that ended with parliamentary elections in October

**There cannot be consent to this in view of the flagrant violation of the Constitution and the principles of a democratic state of law. Public media must first be repaired reliably and legally**

Andrzej Duda, Poland President

**DUDA'S BILL**

Duda said he would submit in the coming days his own bill, including other budget expenses such as pay rises for teachers, and asked for parliament to reconvene to adopt these proposals before the end of the year

**ESCALATING STAND-OFF**

The veto will escalate a growing stand-off between Duda, an ally of Poland's former ruling populists, and the new pro-EU government of PM Donald Tusk

President Andrzej Duda said that he would veto the bill that includes 3 billion zlotys ($762 million) for public media and would propose a bill of his own instead

**KEEPING SPIRITS BRIGHT**

People walk through the streets as they take part in Christmas Eve celebration in Lviv on Sunday amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine | AFP

# Russian strikes kill four in Kherson over 24 hours

**KYIV**

RUSSIAN bombardment killed four persons and injured nine over 24 hours in the frontline southern Ukrainian city of Kherson, a regional official said on Sunday.

Russian forces fired 71 shells at Kherson from Saturday to Sunday morning, hitting the city centre, residential areas, medical and educational institutions and "critical infrastructure facilities," the region's governor Oleksandr Prokudin wrote on Telegram.

"As a result of Russian aggression, four people died and nine others were wounded, including one child."

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy condemned what he called "brutal terrorist shelling deliberately targeting life-sustaining civilian infrastructure and ordinary streets."

"Unfortunately, there are fatalities. My condolences to the families," the president added in a message on the social media platform.

Prokudin said an 87-year-old man and his 81-year-old wife were among the victims after an artillery shell hit a residential building. Rescuers found a third male victim under rubble, he added.

Zelenskyy said that repair teams would "work around the clock to restore electricity and heat supply" to the city after the strikes.

Separately, Ukraine's air force on Sunday said it had intercepted all but one of 15 drones launched by Russia overnight.

Ukraine recaptured Kherson following several months of Russian occupation in November last year. It is now a regular target for Moscow's forces based on the opposite bank of the Dnipro river, which became a natural front line as the conflict slowed to a war of attrition. *AFP*

**EXPRESS READ**

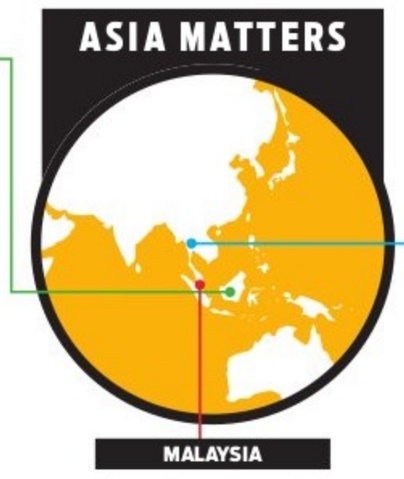
### Cleverly under fire for joking on date rape drug

London: UK Home Secretary James Cleverly was under fire on Sunday for joking about date rape. Cleverly faced a call to step down after he reportedly joked at an event at the prime minister's home about drugging his wife. He said "a little bit of Rohypnol"—the so-called date rape drug—"in her drink every night" was "not really illegal if it's only a little bit."

### Pak polls: Candidates file nomination papers

Islamabad: Hundreds of candidates aspiring to contest the February 8 general elections in Pakistan submitted their nomination papers, as the deadline to file their candidature for seats ended on Sunday. The nomination process started on December 20 and was initially set to be completed on Friday but the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) extended it for two days.

**ASIA MATTERS**



**INDONESIA**

### GOVERNMENT DISTRIBUTES EL NINO AID

Indonesia's Coordinating Minister for Economic Affairs Airlangga Hartarto said the government has been distributing El Nino aid in the form of direct cash assistance (BLT) during Nov-Dec. "Each family receives $13 of El Nino BLT per month. This year, the assistance is being distributed for two months, so each family is expected to receive $26 in total," he said on Sunday. The minister also said the government is aiming to distribute the cash aid to 18 million families. He also stressed that government had been taking measures for securing stocks of rice amid El Nino, *Antara* reported

**MALAYSIA**

### AGENCY WARNS OF DANGER-LEVEL RAIN

The Malaysian Meteorological Department (MetMalaysia) issued danger-level continuous rain warning for several regions in Kelantan and Terengganu for Sunday and Monday. MetMalaysia said areas affected by rain in Kelantan are Tumpat, Pasir Mas, Kota Bharu, Jeli, Tanah Merah, Bachok, Machang, Pasir Puteh

**THAILAND**

### 27 TOURISTS RESCUED AFTER BOAT CAPSIZES

Twenty-seven foreign tourists were rescued from sea after their tourist boat capsized off Pattaya in Thailand on Saturday. The tourists were stranded about three nautical miles from a nearby island of Koh Larn. Rescuers brought the 27 Russian tourists and three crew members ashore. Most of them sustained injuries and signs of shock and distress due to the incident. They received preliminary medical treatment, before five tourists were transferred to hospitals, *The Strait Times* reported. The boat named Sea Beach was designed to accommodate 40 passengers

# Iran's navy adds smart homegrown cruise missiles to its arsenal

**TEHRAN**

IRAN'S navy on Sunday added domestically produced sophisticated cruise missiles to its arsenal, state TV reported.

The TV said both Talayieh and Nasir cruise missiles have arrived at a naval base near the Indian Ocean in the southern Iranian port of Konarak, some 1,400 kilometres southeast of the capital, Tehran. The long range Abu Mahdi Cruise missile has been renamed as Talayieh.

Navy chief Adm. Shahram Irani said the Talayieh has a range of more than 1,000 kilometres and called it "fully smart." Irani said the cruise missile is capable of changing targets during travel.

He said the Nasir has a range of 100 kilometres and can be installed on warships.

A ceremony was held for new equipment of the Iranian navy in which the Shahin kamikaze drone, which appears to now go by the name Sanjar was also delivered. A 6 canister launcher was mounted on the Mowj class frigate "Jamaran" for the first time. The drone has a range of 85 kilometres.

Nima 102 and 305 hexacopter UAVs meant to carry out short range low altitude patrol and intelligence from naval vessels were also delivered.

A missile system is displayed in a ceremony in Tehran on Sunday | AP

Last month, a container ship owned by an Israeli billionaire came under attack from a suspected Iranian drone in the Indian Ocean, as Israel wages war on Iran-backed Hamas in the Gaza Strip.

From time to time, Iran announces the test firing, production and commissioning of new military equipment that cannot be independently verified. The country says it has a stock of various kinds of missiles with ranges up to 2,000 kilometres, capable of reaching its archenemy Israel and United States bases in the region.

Meanwhile, Iran summoned Russia's charge d'affaires after Moscow and Arab countries released a joint statement earlier this week challenging Iran's claim to disputed islands in the Persian Gulf, state media reported on Sunday. *AP*

**NICKEL PLANT**

## Furnace blast in Indonesia kills at least 13

**PALU**

A smelting furnace exploded on Sunday at a Chinese-owned nickel plant on Indonesia's Sulawesi island, killing at least 13 workers and injuring dozens of others, officials said.

It was the latest in a series of deadly incidents at nickel smelting plants in Indonesia that are part of China's Belt and Road Initiative.

At least four Chinese and nine Indonesian workers died when the furnace exploded while they were repairing it, said Central Sulawesi police chief Agus Nugroho.

The blast was so powerful that it demolished the furnace and damaged parts of the side walls of the building, said Nugroho, adding that about 46 workers were injured, including 14 Chinese nationals, some in critical condition.

Authorities are working to determine whether negligence by the company led to the deaths, Nugroho said.

The accident occurred at PT Indonesia Tsingshan Stainless Steel, a subsidiary of PT Indonesia Morowali Industrial Park, known as PT IMIP.

"We sincerely apologise for this incident and we are working closely with authorities to investigate what caused the accident," said company spokesperson Deddy Kurniawan. *AP*

# 147 platoons across B'desh as oppn calls 12-hr block

**DHAKA**

A total of 147 platoons of Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) were deployed across the country on Sunday to maintain law and order ahead of the January 7 elections as a 12-hour road, rail and waterways blockade called by opposition BNP and its allies demanding the resignation of Sheikh Hasina-led government is underway.

Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP) and its mostly far-right allies allege that no election under the incumbent dispensation would be fair and demand the restoration of a non-party interim government for election oversight by amending the country's Constitution.

The blockade began at 6 am and will end at 6 pm, *Dhaka Tribune* newspaper reported. Of the 147 platoons deployed across the country, 16 teams are patrolling in Dhaka and adjoining districts, Shariful Islam, public relations officer at BGB, was quoted as saying by the newspaper.

This is the 12th such blockade called by the opposition parties since October 31, and the first since the announcement of BNP's non-cooperation movement against the government on December 20 during which the party urged people not to pay taxes and utility bills as part of the campaign.

In Dhaka, the BNP and its affiliate parties held separate protest rallies in support of the ongoing blockade and non-cooperation movement. *PTI*

₹9 lakh CR surge in asset base in 2023 as the mutual fund industry bounced back strongly this year.

# Govt makes crucial changes in income tax return forms

New Income Tax Return forms, applicable for assessment year 2024-25, will have a new column for deductions allowed to Agniveers

**DIPAK MONDAL** @New Delhi

THE Income tax department has introduced new Income Tax Return (ITR) Form 1 and ITR Form 4 for assessment year 2024-25.

These ITR forms will be applicable for filing returns in 2024-25 for the income earned during 2023-24.

Usually, the new ITR forms are notified by the I-T department in February and March, but this year the government has notified the changes much in advance. This should help taxpayers familiarise with new disclosures to be made and documents needed to be kept handy.We explain to you the changes (or no changes) made in the ITR forms for the new assessment year.

**No Change in applicability**

The applicability of ITR forms to different classes of taxpayers remains unchanged. ITR Form 1 will be applicable to salaried individuals with income (or loss) from one house property, family pension etc.

ITR Form is applicable to salaried individuals with other sources of income like capital gains from investments, dividend income, income (or loss) from more than one house properties, etc. Salaried individuals with other sources of income like income from presumptive businesses, partnership firms, etc can use ITR 3 and ITR 4.

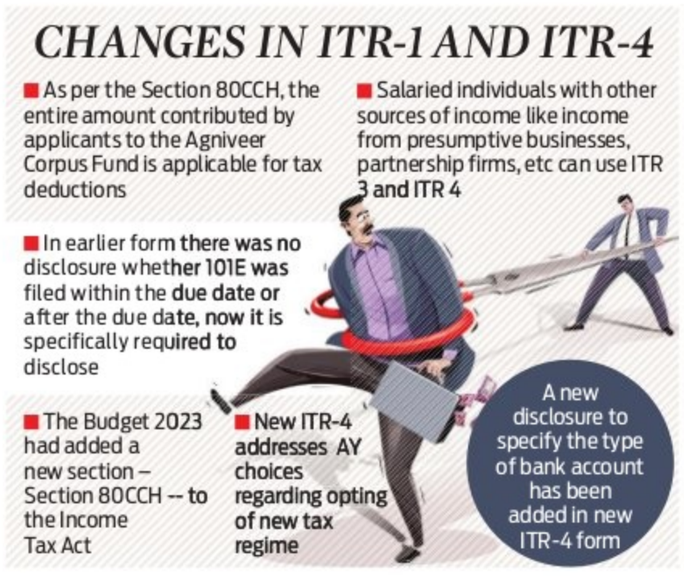
**Deduction for Agniveers**

The Budget 2023 had added a new section – Section 80CCH -- to the Income Tax Act.

As per the Section 80CCH, the entire amount contributed by applicants and the Central Government to the Agniveer Corpus Fund is applicable for tax deductions. ITR 1 and ITR 4 have been amended to include a column for furnishing details of deduction amount allowed under this section.

**Disclosure for type of account**

A new disclosure to specify the type of bank account has been added in the new ITR-4 form. The assessee will have to disclose details of all bank accounts held in India at any time during the previous year (excluding dormant accounts).


CHANGES IN ITR-1 AND ITR-4
As per the Section 80CCH, the entire amount contributed by applicants to the Agniveer Corpus Fund is applicable for tax deductions
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In earlier form there was no disclosure whether 10IE was filed within the due date or after the due date, now it is specifically required to disclose
The Budget 2023 had added a new section – Section 80CCH -- to the Income Tax Act
New ITR-4 addresses AY choices regarding opting of new tax regime
A new disclosure to specify the type of bank account has been added in new ITR-4 form

**Receipts in cash disclosure**

A new disclosure to specify the receipts in cash has been added in the new ITR-4 Form. Earlier, no specific column for cash was there, now a specific column has been separated from any other mode, such as Cryptocurrency etc.

According to Om Rajpurohit, joint partner (Corporate & International Tax) with AMRG & Associate, in the past, all receipts—aside from bank accounts—were disclosed collectively."Now, the business receipt, which might be in the form of exchange, cryptocurrency, amenities, etc., cannot be combined with cash because of this distinct column for cash receipts. Although, it's unclear how this separate disclosure of cash receipt will be used in the future even when the taxpayer is opting for the presumed tax regime," he said.

**New tax regime default option**

The Budget 2023 made the new tax regime the default tax regime. When the taxpayers go to the income tax portal to file their returns, they see the new tax scheme as a default option. In case they want to file their return under the old regime, they will have to opt for it.

According to tax advisory and services firm Taxman, Section 115BAC (6) allows eligible assesses to opt out of the new tax regime. To exercise this option an assessee with income other than from business and profession must indicate his choice of tax regime in the return form. But for an assessee with income from business or profession must exercise this option in Form 10-IEA on or before the due date of filing returns.

In the earlier ITR-4 form, there was no disclosure whether 10IEA was filed within the due date or after the due date, now it is specifically required to disclose. The new ITR 1 and ITR 4 forms have been amended to include these changes.

**ITR changes made last year**

The changes in ITR forms made last year increased disclosures for taxpayers. Individuals and HUF having business or professional income were required to provide more information regarding opt in and opt out of the new tax regime. Such individuals or HUF were told to make specific disclosures regarding advances from related parties. Some of the changes were basically to plug the gaps that were there in the earlier forms.

For instance, separate schedules for set-off of current year capital losses against current year capital gains income were added for salaried individuals using ITR-2. Specific schedules were made in the returns for disclosing income from Virtual Digital Assets (VDA) such as cryptocurrencies for which a special tax regime was introduced in last year's budget. The schedule relating to VDA made the intent and interpretation clear that loss suffered on a particular VDA would not be allowed to be offset against the gain from other VDAs.

MONEY MATTERS

# RESOLVE TO KNOW MORE IN THE NEW YEAR

FINANCIAL KNOWLEDGE

**RAJAS KELKAR**

*(The author is editor-in-chief at www.moneyminute.in)*

THE year ends on a note of euphoria for financial markets. Signals of high equity prices, reasonable inflation outlook, and strong growth prospects mean expectations are sky-high for 2024. Prospects for your money are closely linked to these expectations. If you are new to the world of investments, learning to connect the dots is an important skill.

In an era of information overload, 'not aware of anything' cannot be an excuse. As you take stock of the year and look forward to ringing in the New Year, you must resolve to move forward on the knowledge aspect. A lot of us are emotional when it comes to money and investing. However, you must start getting 'less' emotional and 'more' rational. Your financial decisions cannot be based on 'hearsay', 'uncle says so' or any other impulse. They have to be based on knowledge.

The Reserve Bank of India releases a wealth of information through the RBI Monthly Bulletin. In addition to that, every two months, the RBI releases monetary policy-related documents. An important one is the Minutes of the Monetary Policy Committee Meeting. The view of the committee members on the inflation and growth outlook can indicate the direction your money will likely take over the next year.

The latest bulletin compiles the Monetary Policy documents, speeches given by the RBI governor and deputy governors at public events and articles written by the RBI staff or experts. The monetary policy documents give you a sense of the outlook for inflation and economic growth over the next year. Speeches talk on various topics, from the state of the economy to a review of financial market regulations. Among the articles published, an important one is on the state of the economy.

It is a commentary on the economy based on some serious data set. In the latest minutes of the monetary policy committee, RBI governor Shaktikanta Das and other members of the monetary committee have flagged concerns about rising food inflation. Persistently high food prices hurt the process of bringing down the overall inflation rate in the economy.

To make sense of these documents, you need to start reading them regularly. If you do not belong to the world of finance, it would be tough to do so. However, for the sake of your finances, you need to make a beginning somewhere. To that end, you need to choose a good professional financial advisor. They are trained to help you with financial planning. It helps you define your financial goals and align your asset allocation. Your financial advisor may meet you personally once or twice a year.

You must make these conversations meaningful. Reading the RBI documents on the state of the economy and the impact of the future inflation and growth outlook on your money could help. You can ask your advisor pertinent questions and make the most of the time.

SOURAV ROY

To your advantage, you live in a country with the fastest-growing large economy globally. In 2023, foreign portfolio investors came back to buy Indian equities, and it is one of the best-performing stock markets in the world. Indian companies are relentlessly delivering on their promise of superior profit growth. That will keep all categories of investors interested in the Indian market.

Although domestic mutual funds have grown significantly in size and pump in over $2 billion a month in Indian equities, the Indian population, by and large, is immune to movements in the stock market. They do not have direct or indirect exposure to equity assets. Most of the Indians focus on real estate and gold for investing. Such a situation in a growing economy should be treated as good news. There is potential for financial services across the board to grow. These include banking, stockbroking services, mutual funds and insurance products.

This column has always maintained the importance of knowledge to your finances. However, you need a Sebi-registered professional advisor to use that information and put it to work. Think of yourself as a player and the advisor as your coach. You may know a lot or be the first among equals. However, you still need a coach.

MONEY-WISE

# STRATEGIES POST NEW INDEX HIGHS

FINANCIAL ADVICE

**ASHOK KUMAR**

*Head of LKW-India. He can be reached at ceolotus@hotmail.com*

*(Views expressed here are personal)*

THE BSE Sensex crossed the 70,000 points mark recently. Such milestones are 'celebrated' by the financial media, especially our 'over the top' electronic media, and it invariably sparks a debate on whether a huge correction or even a crash is round the corner.

If I look back at the journey of the BSE Sensex since the late 1980s, it stood at 510 points in January 1987 and then soared to a new high of 4285 points by January 1992 before dropping to 1991 points within a year in January 1993.

The BSE Sensex then soared once again to 5887 points at the turn of the century in January 2000 before literally halving to 2924 points in January 2003. From a point where all seemed lost, we witnessed a huge secular bull run over the next five years that took the index to 20,873 points in January 2008.

The index once again slipped sharply to 8674 points within a year in January 2009 before making a fresh outbreak in late 2013 to end up at another new high of 28,233 points in January 2016. At the turn of the decade in January 2020, the BSE Sensex was once again riding a new high at 42,273 points before the Covid pandemic brought it down to its knees at 25,638 points in March 2020. In just 18 months thereafter, the same index touched the 60,000 points mark, reflecting a breathtaking 30,000 plus points uptick in the short span of 18 months. Almost inevitably, it paused for a fair while traversing to and fro between 55,000 and 60,000 points before a recent take-off took it past the 70,000 points mark.

Clearly, there is enough anecdotal evidence to suggest that there is immense merit in staying invested over really long time frames. However, since investing is an art and not a science, there is no single 'correct' strategy that can be deployed at all given points in time and even more so, to approach a raging bull market and fears of a deep correction or crash.

A lot depends on the life-cycle stage of the investor and their near-term goals and objectives. While staying put may be the optimal strategy for those with a longer term horizon for their investment goals and objectives, the same may not be true for someone with nearer term investment goals and objectives. Such a person, and more so, if the goal set has been achieved or nearly achieved should actually be thinking of booking at least partial profits to divert the requisite money off the table.

Similarly, one must also have the discipline to shut out loud external 'noises', in this case those who are perpetual doomsday predictors as well as those with irrational exuberance talking of the Sensex being poised for a one way take-off sans any hiccups en route.

So, for all the opinions one reads (including those of yours truly), one must remember and I re-iterate -- investing is an art and not a science. Hence, there is no 'single correct' strategy, at any given point in time. To each, her or his own.

# Lenders approve Adani Power offer for Chennai-based Coastal Energen

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** @Chennai

THE Committee of Creditors of Chennai-based power generation firm Coastal Energen has approved the resolution plan submitted by the Adani Power-led consortium, the latter informed the exchanges on Sunday.

"In this regard, the consortium of APL (Adani Power Ltd) has received a Letter of Intent (LOI) from the Resolution Professional (RP) on 23 December 2023. The implementation of the resolution plan is subject to the terms of the LOI and requisite approvals from the NCLT and / or any other regulatory authority / courts / tribunal (as the case may be) under applicable laws," Adani Power said in a regulatory filing.

Coastal Energen Pvt Ltd, the power generating flagship company of the Coal and Oil Group, was to set up a 1200 MW coal fired thermal power plant in the district of Tuticorin in Tamil Nadu. A consortium of banks led by State Bank of India had provided loans to Coastal Energen to set up the thermal power project in Thoothukudi. However, due to delays and cost overruns, the project cost shot up from ₹4,297 crore to ₹ 7,870 crore. This led to financial difficulties for the company, and it was unable to service its obligations to the lenders.

In February 2022, the Chennai Bench of the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), admitted the insolvency application filed by SBI against Coastal Energen.

Creditors of the Chennai-based company had submitted claims of over ₹12,000 crore. Though the details of the resolution plan submitted by Adani Power is not known publicly, it has been reported that the consortium has offered around ₹3,500 crore to the creditors of the company.

Vedanta, Torrent Power, Jindal Power, and Dickey Alternative Investment Fund were also in the race to acquire the company. In October this year, promoters of the company -- Mutiara & Precious Energy Holdings – had offered to pay a total of ₹5,847 crore, including 15% ownership of the company, to its lenders to settle its debts.

# Nagarjuna Fertilizers to pursue OTS with ARC

**ENS ECONOMIC BUREAU** @New Delhi

THE board of debt-ridden Nagarjuna Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd. (NFCL) in a meeting held on Sunday, authorised the company to engage with Asset Care and Reconstruction Enterprise Limited (ACRE) on a potential One-Time Settlement (OTS) under the SARFAESI framework, directly, or through a combination of both approaches.

This parallel track aims to achieve an amicable resolution alongside the ongoing efforts to facilitate the planned slump sale. "NFCL remains committed to working towards a sustainable debt resolution plan," the company said.

"We are actively engaged with ACRE and optimistic about fulfilling the critical conditions for the slump sale transaction. The additional OTS exploration under SARFAESI reflects our proactive approach to ensure a comprehensive and timely resolution for all stakeholders," the company added in an exchange filing on Sunday.

The board in its earlier meeting in September had approved slump sale of Ammonia/Urea and MI businesses with related assets and liabilities (subject to meeting of certain conditions), sale of non-core assets and OTS as debt resolution with ACRE with the funds raised from slump sale and sale of non-core assets was subject to fulfilment of CPs, approval of Lender/ACRE and other applicable approvals and clearances, the company added.

However, ACRE deems the current settlement proposal "tentative" and not binding upon the successful completion of the aforementioned conditions.

This effectively puts the debt resolution plan on hold for now.

Meanwhile, ACRE continues its pursuit of alternative debt recovery measures under the SARFAESI Act.

In May 2023, the agency issued a notice and subsequently took symbolic possession of NFCL's scheduled assets in October.

NFCL proposes a one-time settlement of ₹1,500 crore with asset reconstruction company ACRE. According to the annual report of the company, out of the ₹1,500 crore, the company plans to raise ₹1200 crore through slump sale proceeds, and the balance ₹300 crore from the proceeds of sale of non-core assets to the extent required and approved by lenders and/or or from receipts in case of exercise of call option for 19.7 % equity owned by NFCL in AM Green Ammonia (India) Private Limited from the Slump sale transaction.

The company also plans to use the balance cash/non-core assets towards running the company, settlement of remaining creditors, tax liabilities, future business plan etc.

## *Khawaja denied permit to have peace symbol on bat*

Australia's Usman Khawaja has been denied permission to place a peace symbol on his bat and shoes for the Boxing Day Test against Pakistan, reports said Sunday. A sticker showing a black dove and the words 01:UDHR — a reference to Article One of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights — was on his bat and shoes during training on Sunday.

# Newly-elected WFI pinned down; sr vice-president in focus

Sports ministry asks Sanjay Singh-led body to abstain from managing day-to-day affairs of federation; IOA to form ad-hoc committee once again

**FIROZ MIRZA** @Chennai

ARTICLE X of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), which specifies the duties of the office-bearers, holds the key as the government and other stakeholders scurry to find an amicable solution to resolve ongoing issues in wrestling in the country.

Part 'b' of the article deals with the duties of the senior vice-president and it says, "In the absence of the President, the Senior Vice President shall perform all the duties of the President. This function shall be delegated to the Senior Vice President in writing. In addition, Senior Vice President shall perform all such duties which are specifically assigned to him in writing by the President."

As senior vice president, Devender Kadyan, is one of the two candidates backed by the protesting wrestlers in the newly-elected WFI panel and his elevation to the top post can bring an end to the dispute that has marred the sport in the country for almost a year. But for that to happen, the two factions including wrestlers Bajrang Punia, Sakshi Malik and Vinesh Phogat have to come to a consensus.

With the sports ministry on Sunday instructing the newly-elected executive committee of the WFI to abstain from administering and managing the day-to-day affairs of the federation with immediate effect until further orders, the sport was thrown into further disarray with the only option left is to find a candidate acceptable to both the parties.

In its order, the ministry cited WFI's 'hasty announcement' of organising the U-15 and U-20 nationals 'without following due procedure and not giving sufficient notice to wrestlers for preparations. It should be noted here that the elections were held only on Thursday with former president Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh's close loyalist Sanjay Kumar Singh winning the contest for the top post, defeating former Commonwealth Games gold medallist Anita Sheoran 40-7.

Soon after coming to power, the Sanjay Singh-led body cancelled all the decisions made by the ad-hoc committee including the senior national championships allotted to the Railway Sports Promotion Board and Olympic qualification criteria. It also announced that the U-15 and U-20 national championships will be held in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh, the home turf of Brij Bhushan, from December 28 to 30. Secretary Prem Chand Lochab raised objections to the move and wrote to Sanjay Singh and the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) saying the decisions were made in contradiction to the WFI constitution. It was learnt that the ministry also wrote to the WFI chief asking his reply on the issue and decided to take the latest step after not getting a satisfactory reply from him.

The ministry has also written to the IOA president and asked her to form an ad-hoc committee to run the sport in the country. Notably, the federation was under an ad-hoc committee constituted on May 3 this year till the elections were held on December 21. "Since wrestling is an Olympic sport and WFI is an affiliate member of the Indian Olympic Association and taking note of the compelling current situation arising out of the influence and control of the WFI's former office bearers, serious concerns have arisen about the governance and integrity of the WFI," said the letter written to the IOA president.

"This requires for immediate and stringent corrective measures to uphold the principles of good governance in sports organisation, and thus, now it becomes incumbent on the part of IOA to make suitable arrangements for the interim period for managing the affairs of WFI so that sportspersons of wrestling disciplines do not suffer in any manner and the principle of good governance in the sports body do not get jeopardise. In view of the above, it is requested that an ad-hoc committee may be constituted by the IOA to manage and control the affairs of WFI, as per the defined role of NSFs in the National Sports Development Code of India 2011, including the selection of athletes, making entries for the participation of sportspersons in international events, holding of sporting activities, etc with immediate effect, until further orders," added the letter.

**It is the first step towards something good happening. I hope the government understands more the cause we were fighting for. If a woman federation president is there, it will be better for the safety of women wrestlers. It was a fight for sisters and daughters of the country** —Sakshi Malik

**I served wrestling for 12 years, good or bad only time will tell. I have taken retirement from wrestling. I am breaking my relationship with the sport. Now whatever decision has to be taken, whether to liaise with the government or handling the legal processes, those decisions will be taken by the elected members. The Lok Sabha elections are round the corner and I have to move ahead** —Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh

**Now that I have returned it (Padma Shri), I am not going to take it back. The honour of our sisters and daughters is bigger than any award. All of you have seen what is happening. I will think about taking it back only after justice is delivered. The matter is in court and we are waiting for justice** —Bajrang Punia

**We are seeking time from the sports minister and will request him that the suspension be lifted. We will explain that we have followed rules in taking decisions. Whatever decisions were taken, were taken by consensus** —Sanjay Singh

### Sakshi says it's good

Sakshi, who was the face of protest and announced her retirement from the sport after Brij Bhushan's faction won 13 out of 15 posts, welcomed the move and said, "It is the first step towards something good happening. I hope the government understands more the cause we were fighting for. If a woman federation president is there, it will be better for the safety of women wrestlers. It was a fight for sisters and daughters of the country."

Bajrang, who had returned his Padma Shri in protest on Friday, affirmed that he will not roll back his decision until complete justice is done. "Now that I have returned it, I am not going to take it back. The honour of our sisters and daughters is bigger than any award. All of you have seen what is happening. I will think about taking it back only after justice is delivered. The matter is in court and we are waiting for justice," he told a news agency. Meanwhile, Brij Bhushan, a BJP member of parliament, met the party's national president JP Nadda after the ministry's decision. He later told the media that he has distanced himself from the sport and will now focus on the 2024 elections.

# India's double success affirms need for more Test matches

**KALYANI MANGALE** @Mumbai

Indian players thank the crowd at Wankhede after beating Australia | SPORTZPICS

IN the leadup to the India-Australia Test, it was made clear that there were no points allotted for this match like there are in the Ashes. Australia even brought the multi-format trophy they won in 2021, only to realise later that no points were to be shared. There were no Test championship points at stake in Mumbai. Like the Test against England in Navi Mumbai, this was a one-off Test against the side that plays the longest format fairly regularly.

Even before the fixture started, only one of the sides knew when and where their next Test would be. And none of it mattered when India's vice-captain Smriti Mandhana lofted Jess Jonassen over her head to seal a famous victory against Australia by eight wickets at Wankhede Stadium on Sunday.

This win, the first-ever against Australia, second on home soil in two weeks after a drought of nine years, comes at a time with a new coach taking over the reins after a long time of uncertainty. After the white-ball series loss against England, the two back-to-back Tests marked the return of the longest format since 2014. India's last Test wins came in the same year. Even if you want to check the highlights of India's wins from that year, you can only find a grainy vision of the Wormsley Test against England when the Mithali Raj-led side beat England with eight debutants. There are not many photos available from the win against South Africa in Mysore, the footage is a distant dream. However, now, the world saw India dominate the format. For a team that was asked to win more matches, if they wanted any major changes in the way they function, these two Tests have laid a foundation for more Tests to come. Even players want more of these Tests despite their tired bodies need some rest. "We are fully recovered (laughs). When you see the results after so many days of hard work, you've been preparing for it for 15 days, so when you get the result the body recovers by itself," Sneh Rana, the Player of the Match for her seven wickets in the match, said.

"It is always an amazing feeling when you contribute something to the team. This feeling is hard to describe in words. I feel good. They are very important because Test matches (for women) are happening in India after a long time. Test matches hold a lot of significance for people. We are fortunate that we got to play two back-to-back Tests, that too in home conditions. I'm hopeful that we get more Test matches going forward and it will be good not just for us but also for the girls who will play for the country in the future," she added.

Alyssa Healy, Australia's captain echoed similar sentiments. "Standing there at the presentation, when Anjum Chopra asked me a question, I said 'yup, imagine playing two more of these'. That would be an unbelievable experience for our group and probably a true test of both side's abilities. In a one-off Test [with] India playing in their home conditions, you'd expect them to be heavy favourites. We'd love to see more and more, and it would create a real contest in three games," she said.

Since 2017, there have been only two teams, England and Australia, that have gathered all the silverware there is to win. In recent times, Australia have been the team that has stood between the Indian side and the ultimate glory. Whether it was the 2020 T20 World Cup in front of the full Melbourne Cricket Ground or the gold medal match at the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham in 2022. For India to beat the side that has hardly seen any significant loss in such a remarkable fashion makes it a sweeter victory.

**Brief scores:** Australia 219 & 261 (Tahlia 73; Sneh 4/63) **lost to** India 406 & 75/2 in 18.4 ovs (Mandhana 38 n.o).

**Full story: newindianexpress.com**

# On cloud nine: Sneh delivers yet again for India

**KALYANI MANGALE** @Mumbai

WHEN Sneh Rana came to bat in the second innings of the Test against England at the County Ground in Bristol, India were holding on to a slim lead after being asked to follow on by Heather Knight. Soon, she lost two batting partners — Harmanpreet Kaur and Shikha Pandey.

Wicketkeeper Taniya Bhatia by her side, she was the last recognised batter in the line-up with a responsibility to save the match for her team on her Test debut. And she nailed her job with 80 runs off 154 balls and an unbeaten partnership of 104 runs took the game away from the hosts. It didn't win India a match, but it was a riveting display of character. Rana, on her debut, was a hero.

Since then, Rana had to wait for her chance in the format. When India played a pink-ball Test against Australia, Rana was not part of the playing XI. She had to wait till 2023 and once she got a chance, she took it with both hands. She took nine wickets in two matches, helping India beat England and Australia at home in a span of a few days. "When you are referring to 2021, which was my comeback, obviously it was a good feeling for me because it was my debut match. We couldn't win it (against England), it ended in a draw. But our girls fought well. But if you talk about it now, we first beat England and then Australia. They are the two best teams in the world and we competed against them and defeated them by good margins. So it is an amazing feeling and I'm hopeful that we get to play more days cricket in the future," Rana said after India's win over Australia.

Sneh Rana finished with a haul of seven wickets against Australia | SPORTZPICS

Rana took seven wickets in the match, including that of Australian vice-captain Tahlia McGrath in the first innings, and broke the crucial partnership with McGrath and Ellyse Perry in the second innings. "We have played red-ball cricket earlier, our domestic tournaments are played with the red ball (the inter zonal multi-day tournament was last played in 2017-18). It's just a change of ball, a change of colour. Barring that, your skills remain the same, you don't need to change much. The preparations were very simple. There was no need to experiment because red-ball cricket is a long game. So we kept it simple and remained calm. As far as my bowling is concerned, my preparations have always been around bowling the right channels and backing my strengths. I didn't do any experiments," she added.

Even with her personal success, Rana was all praise for the youngsters. "If I speak about Shubha (Satheesh) when she debuted against England, it was amazing the way she handled the pressure. Unfortunately, she couldn't play this match due to an injury. But I hope she continues to contribute to India in the coming times."

Rana was a hero on her debut, and again in Mumbai.

**Full story: newindianexpress.com**

## Chirag wins natl badminton title

**AGENCIES** @Guwahati

CHIRAG SEN clinched the men's singles title while Anmol Kharb won the women's singles crown at the National Badminton Championships here on Sunday. The 25-year-old Chirag, who had beaten second seed Kiran George in the semifinal on Saturday, was engaged in a tough contest against fourth seeded Tharun M.

While Chirag took the opening game 21-14, he lost the second 13-21 before bouncing back to win the decider 21-9.

In women's singles, Anmol was up against Tanvi Sharma in the final. Anmol won 15-21, 21-17, 16-8.

**EXPRESS READ**

### Karan, Divya emerge winners in pistol trials

NEW DELHI: Karan Sehrawat of Haryana and Divya TS of Karnataka emerged victorious at the men's and women's 10m air pistol trials (T2) here on Sunday, concluding the new season's first two national selection trials for rifle and pistol. Olympian Saurabh Chaudhary extended his good run to a second day, topping the men's 10m air pistol T2 qualifications with a score of 586.

### Manan, Vijay enter Masters snooker semis

CHENNAI: Manan Chandra and Vijay Nichani on Sunday entered the semifinals of the Masters Snooker at the National Championships. Chandra, who began the day with a 4-0 win over Anurag Bagri in the pre-quarterfinal, registered a 4-2 victory over Mahesh Jagdale in the quarterfinal. Nichani too had a great start, winning 4-1 against Subrat Das in the pre-quarterfinal.

### Boxing nationals: Jaismine, Arundhati advance

GREATER NOIDA: 2022 Commonwealth Games bronze medallist Jaismine (60kg) and former youth world champion Arundhati Choudhary (66kg) registered victories on the third day to enter the quarterfinals of the onging national boxing championships in Greater Noida. Jaismine secured a commanding 5-0 victory over Thongam Kunjarani Devi of Manipur while Arundhati beat Amita of All India Police 5-0.

## Chelsea suffer Xmas misery

**AGENCIES** @Wolverhampton

WOLVES condemned Chelsea to a fourth defeat in six league matches on Sunday, winning 2-1 in the first Christmas Eve Premier League match since 1995.

Mauricio Pochettino's men dominated possession at Molineux but wasted chances in an incident-packed game littered with careless defensive errors by the visiting side.

Late on Saturday, Arsenal held title rivals Liverpool to a pulsating 1-1 draw at Anfield. The result meant Arsenal will spend Christmas Day on top of the Premier League. Liverpool are a point behind at second.

Odisha Juggernauts beat Rajasthan Warriors 35-27 on Sunday | DEBADATTA MALLICK

## Odisha Juggernauts off to happy start

CUTTACK: Defending champions Odisha Juggernauts began the Ultimate Kho Kho Season 2 with a commanding 35-27 victory over Rajasthan Warriors at the Jawaharlal Nehru Indoor Stadium in Cuttack on Sunday.Akshay Masal contributed to the Odisha Juggernauts' win by scoring 8 points. The much-awaited second season of Ultimate Kho Kho was inaugurated in the presence of Tenzing Niyogi (CEO & League Commissioner, Ultimate Kho Kho), Sudhanshu Mittal (Kho Kho Federation of India president), Tusharkanti Behera (Odisha sports minister) and Indian women's kho kho team captain Nasreen Shaikh.

# *Head coach Dravid backs Rahul's ability to keep in Tests*

**GOMESH S** @Chennai

THE last time KL Rahul stepped onto the SuperSport Park in Centurion to play in a Test in 2021, it turned out to be match to remember for him and the Indian team. The opener scored a splendid century as India beat South Africa by 113 runs to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. Days after that Test, Rahul was thrown into the deep end as he had to lead the country in the next match as then captain Virat Kohli missed the game due to a back spasm.

While it is the highest honour for any cricketer, the crown came with a burden. Rahul scored a fifty in the first innings, but India lost the match and the momentum. Kohli was back for the third Test, but the hosts, led by Dean Elgar, piled on, securing a come-from-behind series win in Cape Town.

Two years on, he is back in Centurion, and this time, too, there is a massive challenge in front of him as India are getting ready for the boxing day Test in Centurion. Rahul is not an opener anymore. Neither is Shubman Gill. Yashasvi Jaiswal is expected to take guard with Rohit Sharma at the other end. If Rahul plays, it will be as a middle-order batter who keeps wickets. In ODIs, the Karnataka batter has made the No. 5 slot his own and has kept wickets in Rishabh Pant's absence.

However, doing the same in the longest format is a different ball-game. He will have to keep wickets through 90 overs of play, come back the next day and do it all over again. India do have KS Bharat in the squad, whose glovework is a thing of a beauty in itself.

And yet, what tilts the balance in Rahul's favour is his ability with the bat. Although he has batted only once in the middle-order, on his debut, Rahul has shown that he is capable of adapting. And with the team management looking for batting depth, Rahul's chances of playing seems better than ever.

India captain Rohit Sharma (L), KL Rahul (C) & head coach Rahul Dravid | PTI

In fact, head coach Rahul Dravid called it an exciting challenge, before adding that his namesake is keen on taking it up. "With Ishan (Kishan) not being available this opportunity came up, we had a couple of keepers to choose from and Rahul is one of them. We had discussed with him and he was very confident and was keen on giving it a go," Dravid said on Sunday.

"We do understand it is not something he has done as often (keeping in Tests). But he has been doing it regularly in 50-overs cricket and that takes a lot out of your body. He has prepared well over the last five to six months, he has done a lot of keeping, even though it is in white-ball format, but this will be an exciting challenge for him. I guess one of the things is there's not going to be that much spin bowling, so that will ease him into the role a little bit, something how it goes and pans out. It's really nice to have him for the option he provides us. His ability with the bat will be useful and he has kept in white ball cricket and the question is of transforming that into red ball cricket," the head coach added.

A lot has changed for Rahul since the last time he played a Centurion Test. Should he play on Tuesday, the one thing he would hope for is to have the same kind of luck he had last time around.

What are the most significant events in the education sector which got the nation talking? **Karthikeya S** takes a look at some of them

# FLASHBACK IN EDUCATION

## 23 Turning Points of 2023

**We are accused of saffronising education. But then what is wrong with saffron? — M Venkaiah Naidu, Former Vice-President of India**

### 1 TEXTBOOK RATIONALISATION

THE 'rationalisation' of National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) textbooks was a much talked about issue. The NCERT revised its textbooks from Classes VI to X for the academic year 2023-24 to ensure no overlap of topics. However, the deletions from the history textbooks led to controversy as topics omitted were the history of Mughal courts, the 2002 Gujarat riots, the Emergency, mention of Dalit writers, the Naxalite movement, Industrial Revolution, and Gandhi's contribution to communal harmony.

### 2 STUDENT SUICIDES PEAK AT PREMIER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

IN one of the most tragic developments this year, NCRB data reported that the rate of student suicides in India rose by 70%. Rajasthan's Kota, popularly known as the 'Coaching capital of India', recorded an average of three suicides per month in the first eight months of 2023. Premier institutes like the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) also reported several cases of suicide – many of them from the SC/ST community. Reflecting on this, Dr Soumitra Pathare, Director of Centre for Mental Health Law and Policy, says, "The missing element is the education sector's head-in-the-sand approach to it and unwillingness to address it as a systemic issue, rather than as an individual and personal issue."

### 3 G20 SUMMIT & INVOLVEMENT OF EDUCATION MINISTRY

INDIA'S presidency at the G20 Summit this year made headlines, and had everyone looking forward to the outcomes. Naturally, education was one of the priority areas of discussion at the G20 Summit 2023, and in the months leading to the summit, the G20 Education Ministers met four times in Chennai, Amritsar, Bhubaneswar, and Pune. This Working Group emphasised areas like ensuring foundational literacy and numeracy in the context of blended learning, making tech-enabled learning more inclusive plus, strengthening research and fostering innovation.

### 4 INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND VISA WOES AMIDST GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS

AMID diplomatic tensions between India and Canada, there was tension among Indian students in Canada about their future. Meanwhile, the 2021 batch of Foreign Medical Graduates (FMGs), who returned to India from Ukraine, were unable to continue their education in "safer" countries due to the National Medical Commission (NMC) guidelines. After protests, the NMC announced a three-month academic mobility programme on November 22 for FMGs to transfer to other countries and finish their course.

### 5 NEP 2023 - IMPLEMENTATION AND TRANSFORMATION

IN 2020, the National Education Policy (NEP) was introduced by the Government of India and its impact materialised in the academic year 2023-24. Recognised as a transformative force, this policy envisions a comprehensive overhaul of the Indian education system by 2030. NEP 2023 introduced sweeping reforms in higher education, emphasising flexibility, transitioning from exam-centric to holistic learning, offering clear entry/exit options, synchronising vocational subjects, and facilitating the portability of academic credits to enable more mobility.

### 6 DUSU ELECTIONS FOR THE FIRST TIME SINCE COVID-19

AFTER a gap of three years, the elections to the Delhi University Student Union (DUSU) were held this year on September 22. This year, Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad's (ABVP) Tushar Dedha, Aparajita and Sachin Baisla secured the posts of the DUSU President, Secretary and Joint Secretary, respectively, while National Students' Union of India's (NSUI) Abhi Dahiya bagged the Vice-President's post. The voter turnout for the DUSU elections was 42 per cent. As per Prof Chander Shekhar, Chief of Elections at DU, this gap in conducting elections was due to COVID-19 and lockdowns. "It was important that we conducted the DUSU elections this year after a huge gap, as student politics keep campus democracy alive," he says.

**DU STUDENT BODY**

President: Tushar Dedha, ABVP

Vice-President: Abhi Dahiya, NSUI

Secretary: Aprajita, ABVP

Joint Secretary: Sachin Baisla, ABVP

### 7 EXAM PAPER LEAKS

**Amogha Arnava Viva,** TSPSC aspirant

THE news of the Telangana State Public Service Commission (TSPSC) exam paper leak and the cancellation of the exams came as a blow to the TSPSC aspirants and unemployed youth of the state at large. "This whole ordeal has incentivised many to give up on public service commission examinations," says Amogha Arnava Viva, a TSPSC aspirant. Other paper leaks which were controversial are that of Assam High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) exam, Maharastra Higher Secondary Certificate (HSC) exam and Rajasthan Eligibility Exam for Teachers (REET).

### 8 IIT MADRAS OVERSEAS CAMPUS

Prof Preeti Aghalayam

IN a first for any Indian public higher educational institute, an overseas campus of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras was inaugurated on November 6. Located in the autonomous region of Zanzibar, Tanzania, this campus was the result of an MoU signed between the Ministry of Education, Government of India and the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, Zanzibar on July 6, 2023. The institute offers programmes like Bachelor of Science and Masters of Technology programmes in Data Science and Artificial Intelligence, with more programmes to be added next year.
In addition, the Zanzibar campus has also made history by being the first IIT to be headed by a woman – Prof Preeti Aghalayam. "I feel privileged and grateful at having access to such an unparalleled opportunity. IIT Madras Zanzibar has begun on a stunningly positive note, with a diverse and bright student cohort and very committed faculty and staff, housed in a beautiful and well-appointed campus," says the professor.

### 9 SEGREGATION OF MESS AREAS IN IITs GARNERS ACCUSATIONS OF CASTEISM

AT IIT Bombay, "vegetarian only" posters appeared in a section of a mess and the institute imposed a fine of ₹10,000 on a student who attempted to eat there. Even IIT Hyderabad quietly introduced a separate veg-only dining hall.

**Calling those who eat meat 'impure' and those who do not eat meat as 'pure' becomes a symbolic way of reinforcing superiority of savarnas over others** — Member, Ambedkar Periyar Phule Study Circle (APPSC), IIT Bombay

### 10 SEXUAL HARASSMENT AT INDRAPRASTHA COLLEGE BY OUTSIDERS DURING FEST

ON March 28, "unknown" men scaled the walls of Indraprastha College for Women (IPCW, affiliated with Delhi University), during their annual fest and harassed the students – particularly those who are gender minorities. This is not the first time this has happened at a college, bringing up the question of the security of students. Hence, in November, the Delhi High Court asked Delhi Police, DU and IP University to frame standard operating procedures for security measures at college fests.

**College campuses must be safe spaces for their students... We protested because we needed to reclaim the campus as ours** — Shambhavi, All India Students' Association, North Zone Convenor, DU

EXPRESS ILLUSTRATION

### 11 EDUCATION WELCOMES THE AI WAVE

THE arrival of the generative AI tool ChatGPT has taken the world by storm – with a few students even testing its capabilities against competitive tests and exams. It was revealed that the chatbot could not only clear MBA and Law School entrance exams in the USA but also Google's coding test. However, it fared terribly in the Joint Entrance Examination (JEE), only getting 11 questions right.
Performance in exams notwithstanding, the integration of AI tools like ChatGPT has begun in India. For instance, India saw its first AI school coming up at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on August 25, arming its teachers with an array of resources.

**We will work on constructing informed public opinion to push against misinformation and misrepresentation of the Palestinian cause** — Dr Maya John, DU

### 12 ACADEMIC DISCOURSE ON PALESTINE STIFLED?

FROM an online lecture by former DU Professor Achin Vanaik at OP Jindal Global University titled The History and Politics of the Palestinian Present to Professor Sharmistha Saha of IIT Bombay receiving flak for organising a screening of a Palestinian documentary — academic freedom when it comes to talking about the Israel-Hamas war on campus was stifled.

**The IMA has been demanding that the Centre introduce laws that criminalise attacks on healthcare professionals, just like the Indian Government passed the Epidemic Diseases (Amendment) Act (2020)** — Dr Sharad Agarwal, National President, Indian Medical Association

### 13 ATTACKS ON JUNIOR RESIDENTS AND MEDICAL INTERNS

ATTENDEES of a patient in the Government Medical College, Jammu, attacked a junior doctor on November 26. Before that, 23-year-old Dr Vandana Das was brutally stabbed to death by the very patient that she was treating on May 10. These are only a few incidents among the increasing cases of violence against medical interns and junior resident doctors in the country this year.

### 14 RESURGENCE OF SKILL INDIA

THE Skill India campaign has seen a resurgence in 2023 due to several government initiatives. While presenting the Union Budget for 2023-24, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman proposed the launch of a unified Skill India Platform. Later, in October this year, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan also launched the IndiaSkills 2023-24 programme, which is a precursor to the WorldSkills competition – an international event to raise the recognition of vocational skill-holders.

BYJU'S

**WHAT PLAGUED EDTECHS?**
- Layoffs
- Fund crunch
- Value plummeting

### 15 Crisis in Byju's upends India's EdTech sector

ONE of the most shocking headlines has been the crisis triggered in the EdTech sector, inducing layoffs and an overall decline in growth. In September, it was reported that the total funding for EdTechs plunged to 48% from January 1, 2023, to August 7, 2023. Most strikingly, BYJU'S value plummeted from 22 billion USD to between 5.1 billion USD and 8.4 billion USD.

### 16 MANIPUR STUDENTS DISPLACED

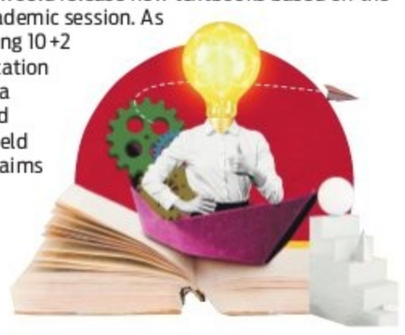
ONE of the most tragic consequences of the violence in Manipur has been the displacement of children and adolescents in the state. As per the Manipur government, over 14,000 children have been displaced. However, Kerala, Delhi and others agreed to let displaced students from Manipur join their schools, colleges, and universities to finish their education.

### 17 OPPOSITION STATE GOVERNORS AND GOVERNMENTS CLASH, EDUCATION LOSES

THIS year, state governments were at loggerheads with their state governors over various educational matters — be it over the National Entrance-cum-Eligibility Test (NEET) in Tamil Nadu, or appointments of vice-chancellor in Kerala and West Bengal. However, these political brickbats have left the education sector in limbo in the states, academics from affected universities from these states allege. For instance, the unfolding chaos in Kerala between Governor Arif Mohammed Khan and the ruling party CPI (M)'s student wing, Students' Federation of India.

### 18 FIRST DRAFT OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK LAUNCHED

AMIDST the brouhaha over the rationalisation of NCERT textbooks, the Union Ministry of Education released an initial draft of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) in August. As per the ministry, they would release new textbooks based on the NCF from the next academic session. As per the NCF, the existing 10+2 system of school education would be replaced by a 5+3+2+2 structure and Board exams will be held twice a year. The NCF aims to develop linguistic proficiency in at least three languages among students by the time they turn 15 years old.



### 19 PREVALENCE OF RAGGING DESPITE PREVENTIVE NORMS?

**511 RAGGING CASES IN 2023**

STATISTICS from the Anti-Ragging Cell of the University Grants Commission (UGC) showed 511 ragging cases reported in 2023. While this is a decrease from 810 cases of ragging reported last year, this number still proves the persistence of ragging in Indian higher educational institutes (HEIs). Despite anti-ragging guidelines introduced by the UGC, this year, a few cases of ragging even took a criminal turn – case in point, the ragging and resultant suicide of Swapnodeep Kundu, a first-year undergraduate student of Jadavpur University in West Bengal.

NO TO NEXT, SAVE MEDICAL EDUCATION
On the occasion of ALL INDIA PROTEST WEEK
PROTEST DEMONTRATION on DOCORS' DAY
AIDSO WB State Medical Unit

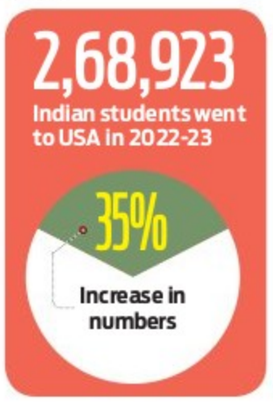
### 20 NEET-PG VS NEXT CONUNDRUM

WHEN the National Medical Commission (NMC) proposed the National Exit Test (NExT) as a single licentiate and eligibility test for MBBS graduates to replace NEET PG and Foreign Medical Graduate Examination starting with 2019 batch, students were up in arms. Hence, NMC had to defer it until further notice. Career coach Jayaprakash Gandhi says, "There is nothing wrong with introducing a new exam, but students need to be given clarity."

### 21 ENROLMENT OF INDIAN STUDENTS IN USA AT AN ALL-TIME HIGH

THE United States of America has always been a popular education destination for Indian students. This is once again established by the Open Doors Report 2023, which says that 2,68,923 Indian students went to the USA to study in the academic year 2022-23. These numbers are a 35% increase from last year and an all-time high for India. Also, India is the top target for graduate and UG hiring, as for Indian students, 70% of American varsities prioritise UG outreach and 80% prioritise graduate outreach.

**2,68,923** Indian students went to USA in 2022-23

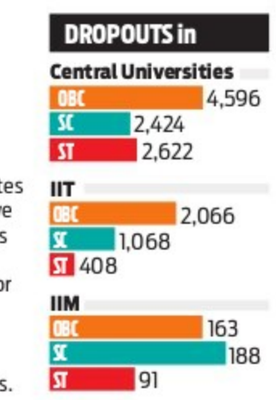



### 22 UNION BUDGET: INCREASE IN ALLOCATION FOR EDUCATION

In the Union Budget of 2023, the Department of School Education and Literacy saw a 15.6% increase in budget allocation from ₹59,503 crores in 2022-23 to ₹68,805 crores in 2023-24. Also, ₹4,000 crore was set out in for the Pradhan Mantri Schools For Rising India (PM-SHRI) initiative. In an 8% increase, the Department of Higher Education was given a sizable budget allocation of ₹44,094 crores. Overall, the education sector saw a total increase in the budget of 13%.

### 23 SC/ST DROPOUTS FROM PREMIER INSTITUTES IN INDIA

OVER 13,600 reserved category students dropped out from central universities, Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) and Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) in the last five years. While data on NLU dropouts is unavailable, central varsities face a graver situation compared to state or deemed universities. These are not just numbers but a compelling tale about the lives of marginalised students at India's premier institutes.




*— With inputs from* ***Mrittika Banerjee***

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS City

# Bengaluru Express

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25•12•2023
MONDAY

**DAY'S DIARY**

## *Heinous crime*

On this day in 1968, 44 Dalit farmers were burnt alive in a hut by Gopalakrishna Naidu at Keezhvenmani, a village near Nagapattinam

**BACKGROUND**

During the Green Revolution, production increased and farmers wanted a pay hike. A tripartite agreement was sealed but the landowners did not keep the promise

**DEMANDS PUT FORTH**

The Dalits demanded dignity, to be treated as humans and not as animals, equality, and their bodily labour stop being exploited from the landowners

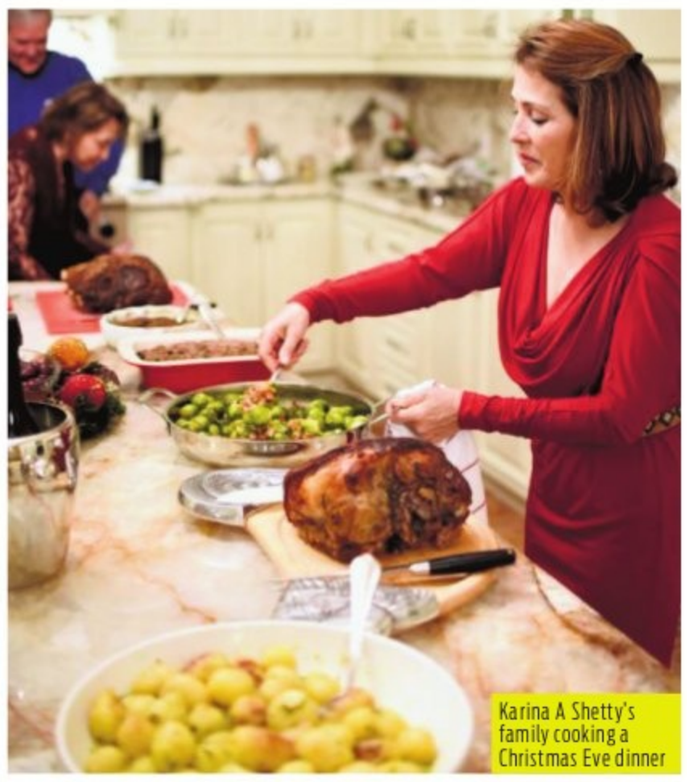
**THE AFTERMATH**

An FIR was filed against 23 people, the prime accused being Gopalakrishna. Indira Parthasarathy released a novel, *Kuruthipunal* about it

## *CE's pick of Christmas recipes*

PG 3

Foreign residents in B'luru are embracing local styles while also blending their cultures to create a unique X'Mas experience



Karina A Shetty's family cooking a Christmas Eve dinner

# MAKING MERRY

POOJA DAS

THE air in Bengaluru, usually humming with the sounds of daily hustle, carries a different tune today – one of joyous carols, laughter, and the mingling aromas of a myriad of festive cuisines. As the morning sun illuminates the bustling streets of Bengaluru on this Christmas Day, expatriates and long-time foreign residents in the city celebrate the holiday in a symphony of diverse traditions, each adding their unique note to the festive melody.

Beate Renninger with daughter Kaija

Yana Lewis with her students of the Lewis Foundation

Digital creator Karina A Shetty, who has called Bengaluru her home for a decade, says that while she spent a few Christmas holidays in the city when her kids were younger, she now tries to meet her parents in the US. "Whenever we have spent the holiday in the city, we have never gone out. We spend time at home, cooking, something we love. It's a family thing," says Shetty, who plans to spend this Christmas in Goa, maintaining her tradition of cooking a family dinner on Christmas Eve. "My mom has brought a few things from the US that we can cook with, spices, dry cod fish for Christmas Eve dinner," shares Shetty, who will be cooking up a traditional fish cod dish in tomato sauce and a special apple-based dessert.

For Beate Renninger, director of Mauve Institut, Christmas begins in early December with the Advent tradition of lighting four candles which represent the four weeks of Advent. "Every Sunday, we light one candle out of four, then we set up the tree and decorate the house," says Renninger. Living around the serene Nandi Hills, Renninger misses the cold, wintry Christmas of Germany. "It's a little tough because it's not cold enough here. In Germany, the days are short and we light a lot of candles, here it's summerfresh. Back home, you have all the heavy food because it's so cold. We don't do that here. But friends will be coming over for a Christmas lunch," says Renninger.

Christian J Randrianampizafy, director of Alliance Française de Bangalore, highlights how French expatriates keep their traditions alive, saying that the festive lights and decorations across the city bring a sense of familiarity. "We attend midnight mass, after which the family gathers around a Christmas dinner to be shared with friends," he says, while also noting his plans to attend various Christmas concerts in churches and auditoriums. While many expats around this time of the year tend to leave the city to celebrate the holiday, ballet dancer Yana Lewis, director of The Lewis Foundation plans to spend a tranquil Christmas at home after a bustling season of performances. "I have lived in Bengaluru for 25 years now, so I don't normally spend Christmas in the city. But this year I will be spending the day at home. I just finished three performances of a production called *Alice*, which was a really big show for us. We decided that we would spend Christmas at home and just relax," shares Lewis, looking forward to enjoying a leisurely lunch out in the city.

Chef Piched Paoleng, from Zen at The Leela Palace, brings a Thai twist to the Christmas festivities. "Living in Bengaluru for nearly a decade has definitely changed my Christmas traditions. One thing I truly miss is attending the Christmas family gatherings back in Thailand. While I reminisce about the tropical touch of Thailand, I have grown to love the city's festive spirit. I usually attend carol singing at church with friends, followed by a gift-giving ceremony at my house," shares Paoleng.

## *CAROLS, CAKES, AND A MERRY CHRISTMAS!*

Hudson Memorial Church

X'Mas shoppers in Vasanth Nagar

Phoenix Marketcity

Taj West End

St. Andrew's Church

Garuda Mall

As the festive season sweeps over Bengaluru, the city has transformed into a wonderland of twinkling lights and vibrant decorations. From the tranquil halls of St. Mark's Cathedral to the lively lanes of Brigade Road, the city dons a festive garb, shimmering with lights and adorned with merry decorations.

ALLEN EUGENUSE J AND VINOD KUMAR T

**Aslam Gafoor** (@aslamgafoor) is a hospitality professional with experience in business development, sales and marketing with well-known hotels, and food and beverage companies. A few of his passions are travel, food and wine, and he enjoys sharing these experiences as a columnist.

GRUB HUB

**THE QUIZ WILL BE PUBLISHED EVERY SATURDAY**

Send answers to **bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com** with the subject line **'Food quiz'**

The correct answers and names of the first three respondents with right answers will be featured in *CE* on Monday. The first prize winner will receive a a set meal for 2, worth ₹2,000, from Amiel Gourmet **

**THE RIGHT ANSWERS**

1) Bouillabaisse 2) Moussaka 3) Strudel

**FIRST THREE TO GET IT RIGHT**

1. Lathish Venugopal 2. Jeevan SR Srinath 3. Mahesh R

## CITY READ

### Hospital organises Christmas celebrations for elderly

Manipal Hospitals embraced the spirit of giving this Christmas by ensuring the joy of surprise and celebration reached the elderly. Departing from the traditional practice of elders gifting the younger generation, the Santas from all 12 South Cluster units of Manipal Hospital geared up for a heartwarming mission to bring smiles to the faces of senior citizens aged 90 and above. The initiative spanned 10 Manipal Hospital units in Bengaluru, one unit in Mysuru, and another in Salem. The team at Manipal Hospital delivered a heartening Christmas experience, showcasing the essence of the season through this gesture towards the elderly.

Happy birthday
Manoj Aradhya
Happy Birthday! May your birthday be wonderful and full of surprises and Joys.
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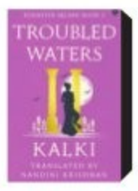
# BOOK NOOK




## Troubled Waters: Ponniyin Selvan Book 2

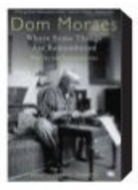
**Translated by Nandini Krishnan**

As intrigues coil the Chozha Empire, the buck stops with one woman. Why does Nandini wield such power over her influential husband, Pazhuvettaraiyar? Why does the mere mention of her name torment Crown Prince Aditya Karikalan? Find out in a new translation of the classic Tamil novel.

## Shooting the Sun

**by Nandita Haksar**

The human rights lawyer's timely book on Manipur in which she explores with clarity and courage, a complex geopolitical problem, exposing the bankruptcy of identity politics in the state, never losing sight of those that have suffered—and continue to—the most in this conflict.




## Where Some Things Are Remembered

**By Dom Moraes**

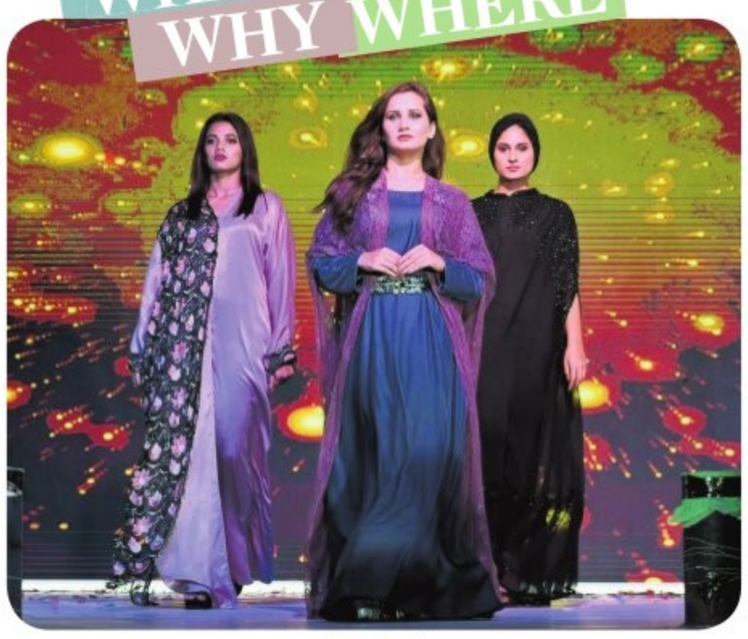
The best journalistic writing by one of the finest writers of the 20th century, featuring legendary personalities like Indira Gandhi, Laloo Prasad Yadav, KPS Gill, Namdeo Dhasal, and Mother Teresa.

## Tara's Truce

**By Kavita Kané**

Tara, Vali's wife; Sugriv's queen and the woman behind Rama's curse. Kané narrates the tale of Tara's truce—the compromises Tara made to fulfill her divinely ordained purpose, including marrying her husband's killer.

# WHAT WHEN WHY WHERE



## Fun Fest

Step into one of Karnataka's biggest expos with the second edition of Mehfil, representing an eclectic mix of people, products, artisans, and performers from various backgrounds with flea markets, food, and music, capturing the heart of contemporary art and culture.

**WHEN:** Dec 25, 12pm **WHERE:** Jayamahal Palace Hotel, Palace Road
**DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

## Candle Craft

Discover the art of candle-making in this workshop, where you'll learn the essentials, blend unique scents with essential oils, create custom candles, and bring home your own crafted masterpieces to brighten your space.
**WHEN:** Dec 25, 12.30pm
**WHERE:** Paint Cafe Studio, Whitefield
**DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

## Art Therapy

Explore the world of canvas and wood painting in this engaging workshop. Create a stunning landscape on a wooden plank, a masterpiece ready to adorn your walls.
**WHEN:** Dec 26, 5pm **WHERE:** Art Beat, HSR Layout **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

## Divine Dance

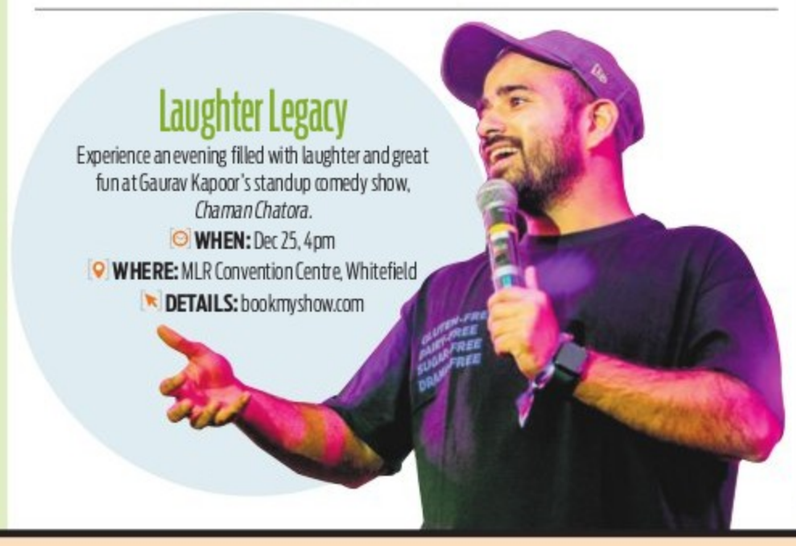
Experience *Colours of Krishna*, a dance performance choreographed by Madhulita Mohapatra and presented by Nrityantar Dance Ensemble, blending mythology with human emotion, and depicting Krishna in diverse roles – from son and friend to saviour and lover. **WHEN:** Dec 26, 6.30pm **WHERE:** Medai - The Stage Bengaluru, Koramangala **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

## Snow Creations

Set off on an adventure with this snow globe-making workshop where you delve into creating your own winter wonderland. Allow your imagination to flourish while designing miniature scenes and incorporating personalised elements.
**WHEN:** Dec 25, 11.30am **WHERE:** Saspire Studio, JP Nagar **DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

## Rhythmic Moves

Experience the world of dance with private classes, exploring various dance forms, including Salsa, Bachata, Jive, East Coast Swing, West Coast Swing, and Tango.
**WHEN:** Dec 26, 10am **WHERE:** LVDS, Indiranagar
**DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com



## Laughter Legacy

Experience an evening filled with laughter and great fun at Gaurav Kapoor's standup comedy show, *Chaman Chatora*.
**WHEN:** Dec 25, 4pm
**WHERE:** MLR Convention Centre, Whitefield
**DETAILS:** bookmyshow.com

CHILLY MORNING

Amidst rustling leaves, walkers at Lalbagh rest near the Glass House during their early morning walk | NAGARAJA GADEKAL

# QUICK FIX

## CHILLI OIL NOODLES

Contributed by **Gopika Sidharthan,** Chennai

**INGREDIENTS**

- **Garlic finely chopped:** 2 tbsp
- **Onions finely chopped:** 2 Spring
- **Toasted Sesame Seeds:** 1 tbsp
- **Red Chilli Flakes:** 2 tsp
- **Noodles:** 100 grams
- **Oil:** 4 tbsp
- **Sugar:** 1 tsp
- **Salt to taste**
- **Soy Sauce:** 1 tbsp
- **Vinegar:** 1 tbsp

**METHOD**

- Bring water to a rolling boil and add salt to the water. Add in your noodles and cook it as per package direction. Once the noodles are cooked, drain it and rinse it with cold water. Drain the noodles completely and set aside till use.
- In a mixing bowl take in garlic, spring onions, sesame seeds, chilli flakes. Heat your 4 tablespoon of oil till it gets smoking hot. Pour the hot oil over the garlic chilli flakes mixture and mix it really well. I didn't add soy sauce, sugar, salt, vinegar and mix till the sugar completely dissolved. This is your chilli oil garlic mixture.
- Now add in your cooked noodles into your chilli oil and use two forks or tongs and toss it completely so the noodles are coated in the garlic chilli oil mixture. Serve immediately.

## What's cooking in your kitchen?

We are hungry for recipes with minimum ingredients and maximum flavours. Share your quick-fix with us, along with step-by-step photos, at bengalurucityexpress@gmail.com

# FIT BIT

## PRAPADA VIRASANA HEAD DOWN

(TIP TOE HERO POSE HEAD DOWN)

**In Sanskrit, 'prapada' means tips of toes, 'vira' means hero and 'asana' means pose. This is a challenging variation of Virasana (Hero Pose) that works wonders for the feet. It is a great modification for the practitioners who find it difficult to sit in Virasana.**

**STEPS**

- Start in Vajrasana (Thunderbolt Pose), on all fours, Table Top Pose.
- Tuck your toes in. Inhale. Bring the toes, heels, and knees closer and together.
- If possible, you can lean forwards. With the help of hands, bring the heels together, if possible.
- Inhale. While exhaling, slowly push your hips back to sit on your heels . Bring your body upright. Ensure you are sitting with the back straight.
- Exhale, bend your upper body forward, head down. Keep your arms open wide.
- Balance your body on your curled toes Remain here for 5 breaths.
- Inhale, raise your body up and exhale, lower your hands, lift the hips up. Release feet to point toes backward. With your big toes together and heels apart, exhale. Sit in Vajrasana.
- Relax. Extend your legs one by one in front and follow a few rounds of stretches and rotations to get more rest.

**BENEFITS**

- Stretches feet and ankles. Strengthens the feet and toe muscles.
- Included in a traditional yin yoga practice.
- Prevents and treat plantar fasciitis, which causes heel pain.
- Benefits hikers, walkers, and climbers.
- Soothes swollen feet during pregnancy.
- Stimulates the bladder, kidney, stomach, spleen, gallbladder, and liver.
- Increases blood circulation at the feet.

**LIMITATIONS**

People with injuries to the feet, ankles, legs, hips, arms or have undergone any foot, ankle, or knee surgeries, avoid this.

Senior citizens and pregnant women should get the guidance of a yoga expert.

**By N Elumalai, PhD Scholar (Yoga Science) at Meenakshi Academy of Higher Education & Research, Chennai**

# NOW STREAMING

## REGIONAL

### MARTIN LUTHER KING (Telugu)

A man with no name or identity lands in a powerful position as the single deciding vote in the local polls that can make or break the candidates' fortune.

**Cast:** Sampoornesh Babu, VK Naresh, Venkatesh Maha, Raghavan, Sharanya

- **Watch on:** SonyLIV

### JI-GARTHANDA DOUBLE X (Tamil)

In the 1970s, an unlikely filmmaker teams up with a gangster with a passion for Westerns.

**Cast:** Raghava Lawrence, SJ Suryah, Nimisha Sajayan

- **Watch on:** Netflix

### MISSION START AB (Hindi, series)

Ten startups have been hand-picked to fight for the chance to raise money. To be able to do that, they must first make it to the finale.

**Cast:** Kunal Bahl, Anisha Singh, Manish Chowdary

- **Watch on:** Amazon Prime Video

### SATHIYA SOTHANAI (Tamil)

Pradeep's goodwill spirals into chaos after he innocently hands over a murder victim's belongings to the police. He gets trapped in the whirlwind of corruption.

**Cast:** Premgi Amaren, Swayam Siddha, Reshma Pasupuleti

- **Watch on:** SonyLIV

### CHAAVER (Malayalam)

Thugs commit a crime, taking an innocent bystander on the run. The police chase them, and moral dilemmas arise among them. Escaping justice, they face life-altering consequences.

**Cast:** Antony Varghese, Kunchacko Boban, Arjun Ashokan

- **Watch on:** Sony LIV

*All the streaming apps can be accessed on smartphones and smart TVs with Internet connection.*

### DRY DAY (Hindi)

A satirical comedy that chronicles the efforts of Gannu, a alcoholic, who attempts to ban alcohol in his town.

**Cast:** Jitendra Kumar, Shriya Pilgaonkar, Annu Kapoor

- **Watch on:** Amazon Prime Video

### CHITHHA (Tamil)

Eeswaran aka Chithha's world crumbles when his niece goes missing. He sets out on a crusade to find her.

**Cast:** Siddharth, Baby Sahasra Shree, Baby S Aafiyah Tasneem, Nimisha Sajayan

- **Watch on:** disney+ Hotstar

## FOREIGN

### THE MOON (Korean)

South Korea's first mission to the moon ends in disaster. Five years later, a second flight leaves astronaut Sun-woo stranded in space.

**Cast:** Do Kyungsoo, Hong Sung-Hee, Sol Kyung-gu

- **Watch on:** Amazon Prime Video

### MAESTRO (English)

This film centres on the relationship between American composer Leonard Bernstein and his wife Felicia Montealegre.

**Cast:** Bradley Cooper, Carey Mulligan, Matt Bomer, Maya Hawke

- **Watch On:** Netflix

### MERRY LITTLE BATMAN (English)

When young Damian Wayne finds himself alone in Wayne Manor on Christmas Eve, he must transform into 'Little Batman' to defend his home and Gotham City from the crooks.

**Cast:** Luke Wilson, David Hornsby, Michael Fielding

- **Watch on:** Amazon Prime Video

### SHAOLIN SOCCER (Chinese)

A former Shaolin monk reunites his brothers, years after their master's death, to apply their martial arts skills to play soccer and bring Shaolin kung fu to the masses.

**Cast:** Stephen Chow, Ng Man-tat, Zhao Wei

- **Watch On:** Netflix, Amazon Prime Video

| SUBSCRIPTION | |
|---|---|
| Netflix: | ₹199/month |
| Prime Video: | ₹299/month |
| Jio Cinema: | ₹999/year |
| Disney+ Hotstar: | ₹899/year |
| Zee5: | ₹699/year |
| Viki Rakuten: | ₹299/month |
| Aha: | ₹699/year |
| SonyLIV: | ₹299/month |

# SEASONED GREETINGS

All we want for Christmas is...food! From plum cake, cookies and meat preparation to wine and fruit punch, the grand Christmas lunch is something many wait for. If you are thinking of an elaborate menu for a sumptuous lunch this year, *CE* has you covered. Here are six delicacies by home chefs that you will surely crave

*Inputs by Aleena Manoj, Aparna U and Sonu M Kothari*

## *Appam and stew*

**BY SABITHA RITA**

**INGREDIENTS**

**FOR APPAM: Rice:** 2 cups

**Cooked rice:** ½ cup

**Coconut mylk:** ½ cup

**Active dry yeast:** ½ tsp

**Sugar:** 1 tsp

**Salt:** to taste

**FOR STEW: Coconut mylk:** 1 cup

**Mixed vegetables** (carrots, potatoes, peas): 2 cups

**Onion** (sliced): 1

**Green chilies** (chopped): 2

**Ginger** (grated): 1 inch piece

**Garlic** (minced): 3-4 cloves

**Turmeric powder:** ½ tsp

**Black pepper:** ½ tsp

**METHOD**

**For Appam:** Soak rice for 4-6 hours; grind with cooked rice, coconut mylk, and water to make a smooth batter.

Dissolve yeast and sugar in warm water, add to the batter, and let it ferment for 6-8 hours.

Add salt, mix well, and make thin pancakes in an appam pan.

**For stew:** In a pot, sauté onion, green chillies, ginger, and garlic until fragrant.

Add turmeric, black pepper, and curry leaves; sauté for a minute.

Add mixed vegetables (can even add mutton or chicken as an alternative) coconut mylk, and salt.

Cook on simmer until vegetables are tender.

Adjust seasoning, and serve the stew with appam.

## *Guava Perad or Guava cheese*

**BY RACHEL NIGLI**

**INGREDIENTS**

**Guavas with red flesh:** 1 kg

**Sugar:** to taste

**Lemon juice**

**Butter:** 2 tbsp

**Food colour** (optional)

**METHOD**

Steam the fruit till tender and then remove the skin.

Grind or mash the pulp and filter it so the seeds get separated. Keep the pulp aside.

In a vessel, add the purée and sugar. The weight of the pulp and sugar should be the same or according to desired sweetness.

Cook on medium heat till the mixture bubbles and then reduce the heat.

Keep stirring continuously or the pulp will get burnt.

Add lemon juice and once the pulp starts leaving the vessel, add two tablespoons of butter and food colour (optional).

Once the mixture forms a soft dough, test if done by dropping a little in a cup of water. If a ball forms, it is ready to be taken off the stove and poured onto a greased plate.

Wait till cool and cut according to choice.

## *Carrot Cake*

**BY NIA CRYSTAL FRANKLIN**

**INGREDIENTS**

**Grated carrot:** 1 cup

**Maida**: 1.5 cups, **Sunflower oil:**1 cup

**Eggs:** 3, **Butter:** 50 g

**Powdered sugar:** 1 cup

**Baking powder:** 1 tsp

**Vanilla essence:** 2 tsp

**METHOD**

Beat the eggs and add vanilla essence to it.

Add butter, oil and powdered sugar to that bowl and mix well.

Sieve maida and baking powder thoroughly (3-4 times).

Add this mix to the bowl little by little and mix it thoroughly (make sure there are no lumps).

Add grated carrots to the mixture in the bowl.

Take a baking pan and butter the surface and edges.

Pour the cake batter into it.

Bake the cake at 180 degrees Celsius for 40-45 minutes.

For decoration, use whipping cream powder and add milk to it then beat it thoroughly until it gets thick. Use the cream to decorate.

## *Pidi with nadan chicken curry*

**BY DEENA ABRAHAM**

**INGREDIENTS**

**FOR PIDI: Raw rice powder:** 1 kg

**Grated Coconut:** 1 ½ cup

**Jeera:** 3 g, **Garlic:** 1 clove

**Salt** to taste

**FOR CHICKEN CURRY:**

**Chicken:** 1.5 kg

**Pepper powder:** 1 tsp

**Turmeric powder:** 1 tsp

**Coriander powder:** 150 g, **Chilli powder:** 100 g

**Garlic:** 1 clove

**Ginger:** 10 g

**Garam masala**: 25 g

**Chicken masala:** 25 g

**Coconut:** 1 cup

**Shallots:** 30 pieces

**Curry leaves:** A few

**Lemon:** 1

**Salt** to taste

**METHOD**

**FOR PIDI:** Fry raw rice powder and grated coconut in a pan until it turns light brown. Grind jeera and garlic. Add these to boiling water along with salt.

Knead it like chapathi dough and make it into small balls.

Boil 2 litres of water in a pot and place these balls in boiling water. Do not stir till the whole thing gets boiled. When it is done, stir with a spoon and allow it to cook for 15 to 20 minutes. Pidi is ready.

**FOR CHICKEN CURRY:**

Clean the chicken and then cut it into small pieces.

Marinate by adding pepper powder, garlic, ginger, garam masala, chicken masala, curry leaves, turmeric powder, coriander powder, chilli powder, salt, and lemon juice. Allow to rest for 30 minutes.

Fry coconut and a sliced shallots in a pan and until dark brown. Grind this mixture.

Add this to the marinated chicken and cook the chicken for 30 to 40 minutes till it is well done. Serve this curry mixed with pidi or on the side.

## *Roast turkey*

**INGREDIENTS**

**Turkey:** weighing 3 kg

**Mixed vegetables** (carrot, potato, beetroot and beans): 3 cups, Butter

**METHOD**

Make a slit in the skin of the turkey at the bottom and smear the butter all around.

Place it on a platter of carrot, potato, beetroot and beans cut evenly, and bake for close to two hours at 120°C.

After an hour, turn the turkey over to bake.

Once done, remove and keep aside. The juice and vegetables from the roast are made into a purée. Pour this sauce over the carved roast while eating.

## *Kala kala*

**BY SABITHA RITA**

**INGREDIENTS**

**All-purpose flour:** 2 cups

**Semolina** (optional for texture): ½ cup

**Coconut mylk:** ½ cup

**Ghee:** ¼ cup

**Powdered sugar:** ½ cup

**Salt:** a pinch

**Oil:** for deep frying

**METHOD**

In a large bowl, combine flour, semolina, ghee, powdered sugar, and a pinch of salt.

Gradually, add coconut mylk to the mixture and knead it into a soft dough.

Take small portions of the dough and roll them into small cylinders or shape them using a kala kala mould.

Heat oil in a deep pan for frying.

Fry the kala kalas in batches until they turn golden brown and crisp.

Remove them from the oil and place them on paper towels to absorb excess oil.

Once cooled down, store them in an airtight container.

Ramkumar Ramanathan and Vishnu Vardhan, from Bengaluru SG Mavericks on their dominant title-winning performance

# Speed and Strategy

**DESE GOWDA**

THE Shiv Chhatrapati Sports complex in Pune, Maharashtra saw a whirlwind of action earlier this month, as four teams of the Tennis Premier League (TPL) vied for championship glory. Following a narrow victory over Delhi Binny's Brigade earlier in the day, Bengaluru SG Mavericks squared off against Bengal Wizards which ended in a dominant win for the Bengaluru-based squad, handing them their maiden title in the tournament.

"It's been an amazing week. It's not easy to win any team event, because it doesn't just depend on your individual effort, but how the team performs as a whole. We kept all our differences away, stuck together, fought well and improved day by day," says Ramkumar Ramanathan, who joined the Mavericks for the 2023 season, alongside Vishnu Vardhan and Arina Rodionova.

Vishnu Vardhan

Ramkumar Ramanathan

Arina Rodionova

Vardhan, along with teammate Rodionava, played a crucial role in the team's title win, with a dominant performance in the mixed doubles match during the final against Bengal Wizards. "Normally in mixed doubles, the male player takes a more aggressive role, trying to intimidate the opposition. The male player also usually covers the female players side as well. But pretty soon, I realised that Arina likes to play aggressively as well. And I didn't have to cover for her and it meant that we could really combine our strengths. I don't think we lost a single match," he says, adding, "I'm really happy that I could contribute well towards my team and together with Ram and Arina, we ended up clinching the title. Despite a rocky start to the tournament, the Mavericks quickly found their footing. "The first match, we lost by just two points. It was a very close finish, but I think we were just getting used to the format. While Vishnu and I have played this format before, it was Arina's first time. So getting used to the conditions and the quick pace of the game was initially challenging for all of us. But we brushed off the loss and started to focus on what needed to be improved. It was all about getting the basics right and taking one point and one game at a time. In this format, the pressure can be quite distracting, and playing to our strengths is the only way to be successful," adds Ramanathan.

The TPL's format, featuring short, intense matches over a five-day period, offers a distinct experience for the players. Vardhan, who has competed in the Wimbledon, the Davis Cup, and the Olympics, found the TPL's rapid pace exhilarating. "Playing for your country is definitely very exciting, but those matches last around three hours. But here, the matches barely last for 20 minutes, so the adrenaline rush that you get is incredibly high. My heartbeat was through the roof. But overall, it was a great experience," he says, adding, "It's hard to predict who's going to make it to the final and everyone will have a shot at it. At the end of the day, It doesn't matter who's a better player, all that matters is how well you perform within those crucial moments. The margin for errors is really low. In a regular match, you can afford to make mistakes and try to counteract it later, but with this format, it's all about carrying that momentum."

## CITY READ

### Karnataka govt-owned company declares dividend for FY 2022-23

Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KS&DL) owned by the Government of Karnataka has declared a dividend for the financial year 2022-23. The company made ₹1,375 core in revenue with a profit of ₹279 crore in the financial year 2022-23. KS&DL announced that the shareholders and board of directors approved a highest dividend of ₹54.75 crore to the Government of Karnataka and Chief Ministers Relief Fund of ₹5 crore. The dividend cheque & CM Relief Fund Cheque were handed over to Chief Minister, Siddaramaiah by MB Patil, Minister for Large & Medium Scale Industries & Infrastructure Development, among others.

### C Krishniah Chetty hosts KWAA and IWAA Awards 2023

In its 6th edition, the Shining Stars programme by C Krishniah Chetty presented an exclusive award ceremony for women achievers, in partnership with the Karnataka Women Achievers Awards (KWAA) and Indian Women Achievers Award (IWAA). Held at Taj Yeshwantpur, the event honoured outstanding women, attended by chief guest Air Marshal R Radhish. With over 4,500 nominations, only 28 KWAA and 25 IWAA awardees were chosen, reflecting exceptional accomplishments. The ceremony aimed to acknowledge women's diverse contributions.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS CLASSIFIEDS

**PUBLIC NOTICE**

CHANGE OF NAME

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **NAGESH B**, S/o Late L. Basavalingappa, R/at No. 27/A, 1st Main, 1st Cross, 7th Block, Hosakerehalli Extension, BSK 3rd Stage, Bangalore-560085, do hereby declare that I have changed my name from **NAGESHA B** to **NAGESH B**, henceforth I shall be known and called as **NAGESH B** only for all purposes, vide affidavit dated 21.12.2023, sworn before Advocate and Notary **S.N MADHU**, at Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, (Old Name) JURI KONWAR** Residing at No. D-10, 3rd Floor, 'LBI Bliss', Belthur Main Road, Kadugodi, Krishnarajapura, Bangalore - 560067. Have changed my name from **(Old Name) JURI KONWAR** to **(New Name) JURY KONWAR** Vide Affidavit Dated 04.12.2023 Sworn Before Notary K.V.JAGANNATH REDDY Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **SMT. SWETHA KRISHNAPPA** W/o. Anand .L and D/o. Krishnappa, aged about 39 years, Residing at No. 533/146/146A, 21st Main Road Opp. RTO Building, HSR Layout, Sector-1, Agara, Bengaluru-560 102 have changed my name from **SMT. SWETHA ANAND** (Old Name) to **SMT. SWETHA KRISHNAPPA** (New Name), vide affidavit dated 20-12-2023, Sworn made before Notary **B.M. Chandrashekar**, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, DHARMESH NAHAR, S/o. Ganesh Mal Nahar, Aged about 43 years, Residing at Flat No. FF105, Tower A Mars Classic Apartment, Sy.No. 11/6, 40/2, 8th Cross, 1st Main, Kenchenahalli, Rajarajeshwarinagar, Bangalore-560064. I declare that the names **DHARMESH NAHAR and NAHAR DHARMESH GANESH**, belongs to me only. In future my name will be called and continued as DHARMESH NAHAR, vide affidavit dated 22-12-2023, Sworn before Advocate and Notary H.S. Sakalesh Aradhya, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I,Nikitha Kumari C.jain w/o Ronak Jain.G, Aged about 31 years, R/at No.B 802, Tower 1 Olive Tower Shahpoorji Pallonji Park West Apartments, Binny mills main Road, Magadi Road, Binnipete, Bangalore - 23 have changed my name from **Nikitha Kumari C.jain** to **NIKITA JAIN** Vide affidavit date 20-12-2023 Sworn before Notary A.C. Subbu Swamy, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, SHRILEKHA GOLLAHALLI BHASKAR, D/o Bhaskar Gollahalli Ramanujacharya, aged around 22 years, resident of No.991/7, 16th "A" Cross, 12th "A" Main, 3rd A sector, Yelahanka, New Town, Bengaluru-560064, has corrected the mistake in name from Shrilekha Gollalahalli Bhaskar to **SHRILEKHA GOLLAHALLI BHASKAR** D/o Bhaskar Gollahalli Ramanujacharya for all purposes in future. vide Affidavit dated 21.12.2023 sworn before advocate and notary public K.S. Giridhar, Bengaluru

**CHANGE OF NAME**

**I, RITHANYA KRUPA P.S.**, D/o. Puttaswamaiah, aged about 26 years, residing at Arakanahalli Village, Maddur Taluk, Mandya Dist., have changed my name from **KALPANA H.P.** to **RITHANYA KRUPA P.S.**, vide affidavit dated 21/12/2023 sworn to before R.S.Vijay advocate and notary Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, ANUPRIYA BARUA DEKA W/o Mr.Kanak Sen Deka, aged about 37 years, resident of Flat No.702, Wing 9, Ahad Euphoria, Ambedkar Nagar, Sarjapura Road, Carmelaram Post Bangalore - 560035, have changed my name to **ANUPRIYA BARUA** vide Affidavit dated 22.12.2023 sworn before advocate and notary public B.M. Chandrashekar, Bengaluru

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **BOMMAYYA NAYAK** S/o Honnappa Bommayya Nayak R/o No.1023, 3rd Cross, 4th Main 2nd Block, BEL Layout Vidyaranyapura, Bangalore - 560097 declares that names **BOMMAYYA NAYAK** & **BOMMAYYA HONNAPPA NAYAK**, both belongs to same person and that is me, vide affidavit dated 22.12.2023, sworn before notary K.C. Pemmaiah, Bangalore.

**CHANGE OF NAME**

I, **VAIBHAV JHA,** (New Name) previously called **VAIBHAV CHANDRAMANI JHA,** S/o. Chandramani Trivikram Jha, Permanent Resident of #203, Orion Tower, EV Homes, Sainikstan CHS Plot No.120, Seawoods, Navi Mumbai, Maharashtra-400706 & presently Residing at #413, Local Squared Co-Living, Mahadevapura, Bangalore-560048. Hereby declare that, I have changed my name from **'VAIBHAV CHANDRAMANI JHA'** to **"VAIBHAV JHA"** Vide Affidavit dated 23.12.2023, Sworn before Advocate and Notary A.M. Rajasekar, Bangalore.

# BRINDA ACHARYA, ANKITA AMAR ON BOARD FOR SACHIN VAALI'S DIRECTORIAL DEBUT

Ankita Amar

The actors will be seen portraying two strong female characters in Nirup Bhandari's next

Nirup Bhandari

Brinda Acharya

A SHARADHAA

NIRUP Bhandari, who is working in a Nagathihalli Chandrashekar directorial venture, has signed his next, which will be directed by debutant Sachin Vaali. The makers have brought aboard actors Brinda Acharya and Ankita Amar for the two strong female character roles in the film. Brinda Acharya, known for her role in *Kausalya Supraja Rama,* will star alongside Nirup Bhandari for the first time. Her character, a social media influencer, is said to wield considerable influence over the story. Alongside this film, Brinda Acharya is also involved in another project titled *Bank of Bhagyalakshmi* starring Deekishth Shetty.

Ankita Amar, who has starred in films like *Ibbani Tabbida Ileyali* and *Just Married,* has landed a significant role in this new project. She portrays a reporter in the film and shares the screen with Nirup Bhandari for the first time.

Sachin Vaali's directorial debut combines comedy and action, and will be about a pertinent social issue. The film will be a family-oriented commercial entertainer delving into the complexities of truth and falsehood.

Backed by Ankit Sonigara for Ankket Cinemas and co-produced by Prashant Mulage, the film is yet to be titled. The film has Sachin Basrur composing the music, Ullas Hydur taking charage of art direction, and Sandeep Valluri handling the cinematography.

## *Bachelor Party* secures Republic Day release slot

CE FEATURES

TEAM *Bachelor Party* recently offered a sneak peek into the film featuring Diganth, Loose Mada Yogi, and Achyuth Kumar with a handcrafted poster and the makers have now announced a release date. The film, which is backed by Rakshit Shetty's Paramvah Studios, is set to release on January 26, and the makers are expected to make an official announcement today.

Directed by Abhijit Mahesh, Bachelor Party is billed as a youthful comedy delving into life after college—marriage and jobs. According to the director, the film resonates with real-life experiences, exploring corporate office dynamics and today's marriages, all with a humorous touch. Shot extensively in Thailand, the director promises humour as sophisticated as Kirik Party, offering a delightful and adventurous ride.

Apart from the lead cast, Bachelor Party features Siri Ravikumar, Balaji Manohar, Achara Kirk, and Prakash Thuminad in pivotal roles, with guest appearances by Mata Guruprasad and Na Someshwara. Arjun Ramu is scoring the film's music, while Arvind Kashyap handles the cinematography.

A still from the film

## *What to do Mama?* Chandan Shetty gets groovy with a single for New Year

CE FEATURES

POPULAR rapper and actor Chandan Shetty has released a single for the New Year. Titled *What to do Mama?* this folk-style theme was released on the singer's YouTube channel.

The song is aimed at the younger audience, resonating with their problems. It begins with the line *Problem, problem, problem, what to do, mama*? and has been composed and directed by Chandan Shetty. The rapper is confident that this song, which will circulate during Christmas and New Year, will capture everyone's hearts.

Chandan Shetty, who also features in the song, portrays a true local persona. Joining him is veteran actor Rangayana Raghu, who plays Chandan Shetty's uncle in this video. Additionally, the song boasts an ensemble cast including popular reality show *Gicchi Gili* artists Raghavendra, RJ Vicky, Huli Kartik, Nitin Amin, Shid Shyad Shiv, and NC Ayyappa, all of whom contribute to this electrifying rap song.

Produced by Chandan Shetty, the song features lyrics penned by Vijay Eshwar. While the choreography is handled by Muruga, the song has cinematography by Uday Leela, editing by Satish Chandra, and Divakar overseeing the art department.

Meanwhile, Chandan, who has also turned an actor is awaiting the release of his projects including Sutradhari, Ellra Kaalelithaite Kaala, and is currently busy shooting for another project.

## 'MM Keeravani's support to *Rangasamudra* is a boost'

CE FEATURES

*RANGAASAMUDRA* brings back Padma Shri and National Award-winning maestro MM Keeravani to Kannada cinema. Renowned for his contributions to blockbuster films like *Baahubali* and *RRR*, Keeravani has lent his voice to a song in this retro drama with music by Desi Mohan. Director Rajkumar Aski and songwriter Vageesh Channagiri expressed their elation, highlighting that Keeravani's inclusion significantly elevates the film. "We approached Keeravani with respect and affection after many years and invited him to Hyderabad, where he agreed to lend his voice to the song," mentioned the director.

The makers shared that Keeravani fondly recollected memories of his stay in a small room at Chamundeshwari Studios in Bangalore, reminiscing about close friend Doddanna and recollected several anecdotes. Additionally, Keeravani expressed his intention to watch the film alongside Rajamouli upon its release.

Team Rangasamudra with MM Keeravani

Noted singers Kailash Kher, Vijay Prakash, Sanjith Hegde, and Desi Mohan have contributed their voices to four songs, while Navin Sajju has sung two songs in the movie.

*Rangasamudra,* produced by Hoysala, features an ensemble cast including Raghavendra Rajkumar, Rangayana Raghu, Sampath Raj, the late Mohan Juneja, Moogu Suresh, Gururaj Hosakote, Ugram Manju, Kartik Rao, Divya Gaud, and Mahendra.

Rangasamudra is scheduled for a release on January 12.

Raghavendra Rajkumar

A still from the film

## Amy Jackson wraps up shooting of *Crakk*

CE FEATURES

ACTOR Amy Jackson on Friday announced the wrap of her upcoming action thriller film Crakk. Taking to Instagram, Amy shared a string of pictures she thanked the audience for the feedback for the first drop of *Crakk*. In the first picture, Amy can be seen holding the film's clapboard with the text "It's a warp" written on it. The film stars Vidyut Jammwal in the lead role.

Aditya Datt, who has worked with Vidyut before for Commando 3 (2019), has helmed Crakk. The director is also known for films like Aashiq Banaya Apne (2005) and Table No. 21 (2013). *Crakk* will also star Arjun Rampal and Nora Fatehi.

A few days earlier, the makers had released the teaser of the film which introduced us to Vidyut, a man from the slums of Mumbai who embarks on a journey into the dark and dangerous world of underground sports. As the film's tagline reads, it is imperative to win this game, as only victory can promise the participants' lives.

*Crakk* is produced by Vidyut's production banner, Action Hero Films. Rehan Khan and Sarim Momin have penned the screenplay and dialogues for the film. With cinematography by Mark Hamilton, the film features music by Mithoon.